DAN THE NEWSBOY

DAN,

THE NEWSBOY.

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DAN, THE NEWSBOY.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCING DAN.

"*Evening Telegram!* Only one left. Going for two cents, and worth double the money. Buy one, sir?"

Attracted by the business-like tone of the newsboy, a gentleman paused as he was ascending the steps of the Astor House, and said, with a smile:

"You seem to appreciate the *Telegram*, my boy. Any important news this afternoon?"

"Buy the paper, and you'll see," said the boy, shrewdly.

"I see—you don't care to part with the news for nothing. Well, here are your two cents."

"Thank you, sir."

Still the gentleman lingered, his eyes fixed upon the keen, pleasant face of the boy.

"How many papers have you sold to-day, my boy?" he asked.

"Thirty-six, sir."

"Were they all *Telegrams*?"

"No; I sell all the papers. I ain't partial. I'm just as willing to make money on the *Mail*, or *Commercial*, or *Evening Post*, as the *Telegram*."

"I see you have an eye to business. How long have you dealt in papers?"

"Three years, sir."

"How old are you?"

"Fifteen."

"What did you do before you sold papers?"

A shadow rested on the boy's bright face.

"I didn't have to work then, sir," he said. "My father was alive, and he was well off. We lived in a nice house up town, and I went to a private school. But all at once father failed, and soon afterward he died, and then everything was changed. I don't like to think about it, sir."

The gentleman's interest was strongly excited.

"It is a sad story," he said. "Is your mother living?"

"Yes, sir. The worst of it is, that I don't make enough to support us both, and she has to work, too."

"What does she do?"

"She makes vests for a man on Chatham street."

"I hope she is well paid."

"That she is not. He only allows her twenty cents apiece."

"That is a mere pittance. She can't earn much at that rate."

"No, sir; she has to work hard to make one vest a day."

"The man can't have a conscience," said the gentleman, indignantly. "It is starvation wages."

"So it is, sir, but he pretends that he pays more than the work is worth. Oh, he's a mean fellow," pursued the boy, his face expressive of the scorn and disgust which he felt.

"What is your name, my boy?"

"Dan, sir—Dan Mordaunt."

"I hope, Dan, you make more money than your mother does."

"Oh, yes, sir. Sometimes I make a dollar a day, but I don't average that. I wish I could make enough so that mother wouldn't have to work."

"I see you are a good son. I like to hear you speak in such terms of your mother."

"If I didn't," said Dan, impetuously, "I should deserve to be kicked. She's a good mother, sir."

"I have no doubt of it. It must be hard for her

to be so reduced after once living liberally. How happened it that your father failed?"

The boy's pleasant face assumed a stern expression.

"On account of a rascal, sir. His book-keeper ran off, carrying with him thirty thousand dollars. Father couldn't meet his bills, and so he failed. It broke his heart, and he didn't live six months after it."

"Have you ever heard of this book-keeper since?"

"No, sir, not a word. I wish I could. I should like to see him dragged to prison, for he killed my father, and made my mother work for a living."

"I can't blame you, Dan, for feeling as you do. Besides, it has altered your prospects."

"I don't care for myself, sir. I can forget that. But I can't forgive the injury he has done my poor father and mother."

"Have you any idea what became of the defaulter?"

"We think that he went to Europe, just at first, but probably he returned when he thought all was safe."

"He may have gone out West."

"I shouldn't wonder, sir."

"I live in the West myself—in Chicago."

"That's a lively city, isn't it, sir?"

"We think so out there. Well, my lad, I must go into the hotel now."

"Excuse me for detaining you, sir," said Dan, politely.

"You haven't detained me; you have interested me. I hope to see you again."

"Thank you, sir."

"Where do you generally stand?"

"Just here, sir. A good many people pass here, and I find it a good stand."

"Then I shall see you again, as I propose to remain in New York for a day or two. Shall you have the morning papers?"

"Yes, sir; all of them."

"Then I will patronize you to-morrow morning. Good-day."

"Good-day, sir."

"He's a gentleman," said Dan to himself, emphatically. "It isn't every one that feels an interest in a poor newsboy. Well, I may as well be going home. It's lonely for mother staying by herself all day. Let me see; what shall I take her? Oh, here are some pears. She's very fond of pears."

Dan inquired the price of pears at a street stand, and finally selected one for three cents.

"Better take two for five cents," said the fruit merchant.

"I can't afford it," said Dan. "Times are hard, and I have to look after the pennies. I wouldn't buy any at all if it wasn't for my mother."

"Better take another for yourself," urged the huckster.

Dan shook his head.

"Can't afford it," he said. "I must get along without the luxuries. Bread and butter is good enough for me."

Looking up, Dan met the glance of a boy who was passing—a tall, slender, supercilious-looking boy, who turned his head away scornfully as he met Dan's glance.

"I know him," said Dan to himself. "I ought to know Tom Carver. We used to sit together at school. But that was when father was rich. He won't notice me now. Well, I don't want him to," proceeded Dan, coloring indignantly. "He thinks himself above me, but he needn't. His father failed, too, but he went on living just the same. People say he cheated his creditors. My poor father gave up all he had, and sank into poverty."

This was what passed through Dan's mind. The other boy—Tom Carver—had recognized Dan, but did not choose to show it.

"I wonder whether Dan Mordaunt expected me to notice him," he said to himself. "I used to go to school with him, but now that he is a low newsboy I can't stoop to speak to him. What would my fashionable friends say?"

Tom Carver twirled his delicate cane and walked on complacently, feeling no pity for the schoolfellow with whom he used to be so intimate. He was intensely selfish—a more exceptional thing with boys than men. It sometimes happens that a boy who passes for good-hearted changes into a selfish man; but Tom required no change to become that. His heart was a very small one, and beat only for himself.

Dan walked on, and finally paused before a large tenement-house. He went in at the main entrance, and ascended two flights of stairs. He opened a door, and found himself in the presence of the mother whom he so dearly loved.

CHAPTER II.

DAN AT HOME.

While Dan was strong, sturdy, and the picture of health, his mother was evidently an invalid. She was pale, thin, and of delicate appearance. She was sitting in a cane-seated rocking-chair, which Dan had bought second-hand on one of his flush days at a small place on the Bowery. She looked up with a glad smile when Dan entered.

"I am so glad to see you, my dear boy," she said.

"Have you been lonely, mother?" asked Dan, kissing her affectionately.

"Yes, Dan, it is lonely sitting here hour after hour without you, but I have my work to think of."

"I wish you didn't have to work, mother," said Dan. "You are not strong enough. I ought to earn enough to support us both."

"Don't trouble yourself about that, my dear boy. I should feel more lonely if I had nothing to do."

"But you work all the time. I don't like to have you do that."

In truth the mother was very tired, and her feeble

fingers were cramped with the stitch, stitch, stitch in endless repetition, but she put on a cheerful countenance.

"Well, Dan, I'll stop now that you are at home. You want some supper."

"Let me get it, mother."

"No, Dan, it will be a relief to me to stir around a little, as I have been sitting so long."

"Oh, I nearly forgot, mother—here's a nice pear I bought for you."

"It does look nice," said Mrs. Mordaunt. "I don't feel hungry, but I can eat that. But where is yours, Dan?"

"Oh, I've eaten mine," answered Dan, hastily.

It was not true, but God will forgive such falsehoods.

"You'd better eat half of this."

"No; I'll be——flummuxed if I do," said Dan, pausing a little for an unobjectionable word.

Mrs. Mordaunt set the little table for two. On it she spread a neat cloth, and laid the plain supper—a plate of bread, ditto of butter, and a few slices of cold meat. Soon the tea was steeped, and mother and son sat down for the evening meal.

"I say, mother, this is a jolly supper," said Dan. "I get awfully hungry by supper-time."

"You are a growing boy, Dan. I am glad you have an appetite."

"But you eat next to nothing, mother," said Dan, uneasily.

"I am *not* a growing boy," said Mrs. Mordaunt, smiling. "I shall relish my supper to-night on account of the pear you brought me."

"Well, I'm glad I thought of it," said Dan, heartily. "Pears ain't solid enough for me; I want something hearty to give me strength."

"Of course you do, Dan. You have to work hard."

"I work hard, mother! Why, I have the easiest time going. All I do is to walk about the streets, or stand in front of the Astor House and ask people to buy my papers. Oh, by the way, who do you think I saw to-day?"

"Any of our old friends?" asked Mrs. Mordaunt.

"Any of our old friends! I should say not," answered Dan, disdainfully. "It was Tom Carver."

"Was it he? He used to sit next you in school, didn't he?"

"Yes, for six months. Tom and I were chums."

"Did he say whether his family was well?"

"What are you thinking of, mother? Do you suppose Tom Carver would notice me, now that I am a poor newsboy?"

"Why shouldn't he?" demanded the mother, her pale face flushing. "Why shouldn't he notice my boy?"

"Because he doesn't choose to," answered Dan, with a short laugh. "Didn't you know it was disgraceful to be poor?"

"Thank Heaven, it isn't that!" ejaculated Mrs. Mordaunt.

"Well, it might as well be. Tom thinks me beneath his notice now. You should have seen him turn his head to the other side as he walked by, twirling his light cane."

"Did you speak to him, Dan?"

"What do you take me for, mother? Do you think I'd speak to a fellow that doesn't want to know me?"

"I think you are proud, my boy."

"Well, mother, I guess you're right. I'm too proud to force myself upon the notice of Tom Carver, or any other purse-proud sneak."

Dan spoke with a tinge of bitterness, and it was evident that he felt Tom's slight more than he was willing to acknowledge.

"It's the way of the world, Dan," said his mother, sighing. "Not one of all my friends, or those whom I accounted such, in my prosperous days, has come to see us, or shown any interest in our fate."

"They can stay away. We can do without them," said Dan, sturdily.

"We must; but it would be pleasant to see some of the old faces," said his mother, plaintively. "There is no one in this house that is company for me."

"No, mother; you are an educated and refined lady, and they are poor and ignorant."

"They are very good people, some of them. There is Mrs. Burke on the next floor. She was in this afternoon, and asked if she couldn't do something for me. She thought I looked poorly, she said."

"She's a brick, mother!"

"My dear Dan, you do use such extraordinary language sometimes. You didn't talk so when we lived on Madison avenue."

"No, mother, but I associate with a different class now. I can't help catching the phrases I hear all the time. But don't mind, mother; I mean no harm. I never swear—that is, almost never. I did catch myself at it the other day, when another newsboy stole half a dozen of my papers."

"Don't forget that you are a gentleman, Dan."

"I won't if I can help it, mother, though I don't believe anybody else would suspect it. I must take good care not to look into the looking-glass, or I might be under the impression that I was a street-boy instead of a gentleman."

"Clothes don't make the gentleman, Dan. I want you to behave and feel like a gentleman, even if your clothes are poor and patched."

"I understand you, mother, and I shall try to follow your advice. I have never done any mean thing yet that I can remember, and I don't intend to."

"I am sure of that, my dear boy."

"Don't be too sure of anything, mother. I have plenty of bad examples before me."

"But you won't be guided by them?"

"I'll try not."

"Did you succeed well in your sales to-day, Dan?"

"Pretty well. I made ninety-six cents."

"I wish I could earn as much," said Mrs. Mordaunt, sighing. "I can only earn twenty cents a day."

"You *earn* as much as I do, mother, but you don't get it. You see, there's a difference in earning and being paid. Old Gripp is a mean skinflint. I should like to force one of his twenty-cent vests down his miserly throat."

"Don't use such violent language, Dan. Perhaps he pays me all he can afford."

"Perhaps he does, but I wouldn't bet high on it. He is making a fortune out of those who sew for him.

There are some men that have no conscience. I hope some time you will be free from him."

"I hope so, too, Dan, but I am thankful to earn something. I don't want all the burden of our maintenance to fall on you."

"Don't call it a burden, mother. There's nothing I enjoy so much as working for you. Why, it's fun!"

"It can't be fun on rainy, disagreeable days, Dan."

"It wouldn't be fun for you, mother, but you're not a boy."

"I am so sorry that you can't keep on with your education, Dan. You were getting on so well at school."

It was a thought that had often come to Dan, but he wouldn't own it, for he did not wish to add to his mother's sadness.

"Oh, well, mother," he said, "something may turn up for us, so we won't look down in the mouth."

"I have got my bundled work ready, Dan, if you can carry it round to Mr. Gripp's to-night."

"Yes, mother, I'll carry it. How many vests are there?"

"There are six. That amounts to a dollar and twenty cents. I hope he'll pay you to-night, for our rent comes due to-morrow."

"So it does!" ejaculated Dan, seriously. "I never

thought of it. Shall we have enough to pay it? You've got my money, you know."

"We shall be a dollar short."

"Even if old Gripp pays for the vests?"

"Yes."

Dan whistled—a whistle of dismay and anxiety, for he well knew that the landlord was a hard man.

CHAPTER III.

GRIPP'S CLOTHING STORE.

Nathan Gripp's clothing store was located about a quarter of a mile from the City Hall, on Chatham street. Not many customers from Fifth avenue owned him as their tailor, and he had no reputation up town. His prices were undeniably low, though his clothes were dear enough in the end.

His patrons were in general from the rural districts, or city residents of easy tastes and limited means.

The interior of the store was ill-lighted, and looked like a dark cavern. But nearly half the stock was displayed at the door, or on the sidewalk, Mr. Gripp himself, or his leading salesman, standing in the doorway with keen, black eyes, trying to select from the moving crowds possible customers.

On the whole Gripp was making money. He sold his clothes cheap, but they cost him little. He paid the lowest prices for work, and whenever told that his wages would not keep body and soul together, he simply remarked :

"That's nothing to me, my good woman. If you don't like the pay, leave the work for somebody else."

But unfortunately those who worked for Mr. Gripp could not afford to leave the work for somebody else. Half wages were better than none, and they patiently kept on wearing out their strength that Nathan might wax rich, and live in good style up town.

Mr. Gripp himself was standing in the door-way when Dan, with the bundle of vests under his arm, stopped in front of the store. Mr. Gripp was a little doubtful whether our hero wished to become a customer, but a glance at the bundle dispelled his uncertainty, and revealed the nature of his errand.

"I've brought home half a dozen vests," said Dan.

"Who from?" asked Gripp, abruptly, for he never lavished any of the suavity, which was a valuable part of his stock in trade, on his work people.

"Mrs. Mordaunt."

"Take them into the store. Here, Samuel, take the boy's bundle, and see if the work is well done."

It was on the tip of Dan's tongue to resent the doubt which these words implied, but he prudently remained silent.

The clerk, a callow youth, with long tow-colored locks, made sleek with bear's grease, stopped picking his teeth, and motioned to Dan to come forward.

"Here, young feller," he said, "hand over your bundle."

"There it is, young feller!" retorted Dan.

The clerk surveyed the boy with a look of disapproval in his fishy eyes.

"No impudence, young feller!" he said.

"Where's the impudence?" demanded Dan. "I don't see it."

"Didn't you call me a young feller?"

"You've called me one twice, but I ain't at all particular. I'd just as lief call you an old feller," said Dan, affably.

"Look here, young chap, I don't like your manners," said the clerk, with an irritating consciousness that he was getting the worst of the verbal encounter.

"I'm sorry for that," answered Dan, "because they're the best I've got."

"Did you make these vests yourself?" asked the salesman, with a feeble attempt at humor.

"Yes," was Dan's unexpected rejoinder. "That's the way I amuse my leisure hours."

"Humph!" muttered the tallow-faced young man, "I'll take a look at them."

He opened the bundle, and examined the vests with an evident desire to find something wrong.

He couldn't find any defect, but that didn't prevent his saying:

"They ain't over-well made."

"Well, they won't be over-well paid," retorted Dan. "So we're even."

"I don't know if we ought to pay for them at all."

"Honesty is the best policy, young feller," said Dan.

"No more of your impudence!" said the clerk, sharply. "Wait here a minute till I speak to Mr. Gripp."

He kept Dan before the counter, and approached the proprietor.

"Well, what is it, Samuel?" asked Mr. Gripp, stroking his jet-black whiskers. "Are the vests all right?"

"Pretty well, sir, but the boy is impudent."

"Ha! how is that?"

"He keeps calling me 'young feller.'"

"Anything more?"

"He don't seem to have any respect for me—or you," he added, shrewdly.

Nathan Gripp frowned. He cared very little about his clerk, but he resented any want of respect to himself. He felt that the balance at his bankers was large enough to insure him a high degree of consideration from his work-people at least.

"How many vests are there?" he asked.

"Half a dozen."

"And the boy wants his pay, I suppose."

"He hasn't asked for it, but he will. They always do."

"Tell him we only pay when a full dozen are finished and brought in. We'll credit him, or his mother, with these."

"That'll pay them off," thought the astute clothing merchant.

Samuel received this order with inward satisfaction, and went back smiling.

"Well, young feller," said he, "it's all right. The vests ain't over-well done, but we'll keep 'em. Now you can go."

But Dan did not move.

"It seems to me you've forgotten something," he said.

"What's that?"

"You haven't paid me for the work."

"It's all right. We'll pay when the next half dozen are brought in. Will you take 'em now?"

Dan was disagreeably surprised. This was entirely out of the usual course, and he knew very well that the delay would be a great inconvenience.

"We've always been paid when we brought in work," he said.

"We've changed our rule," said the clerk, nonchalantly. "We only pay when a full dozen are brought in."

"What difference does it make to you? We need the money, and can't wait."

"It's my orders, young feller. It's what Mr. Gripp just told me."

"Then I'll speak to him," said Dan, promptly.

"Just as you like."

Dan approached the proprietor of the establishment.

"Mr. Gripp," said he, "I've just brought in half a dozen vests, but your clerk here won't pay me for them."

"You will get your pay, young man, when you bring in another half dozen."

"But, Mr. Gripp, we need the money. We haven't got a big bank account. Our rent is due to-morrow."

"Is it, indeed? I don't see how that concerns me."

"Will you pay me to-night as a favor?" pleaded Dan, humbling himself for his mother's sake.

"I can't break over my rule," said Nathan Gripp. "Besides, Samuel says the work isn't very well done."

"Then he lies!" exclaimed Dan, provoked.

"Do you hear that, Mr. Gripp?" ejaculated the angry Samuel, his tallowy complexion putting on a faint flush. "Didn't I tell you he was impudent?"

Nathan Gripp's small black eyes snapped viciously.

"Boy," said he, "leave my store directly. How

dare you address me in such a way, you young tramp?"

"I'm no more a tramp than yourself," retorted Dan, now thoroughly angry.

"Samuel, come here, and put out this boy!" exclaimed Nathan, too dignified to attempt the task himself.

Samuel advanced, nothing loth, his fishy eyes gleaming with pleasure.

"Get out, you vagabond!" he exclaimed, in the tone of authority.

"You're a couple of swindlers!" exclaimed Dan. "You won't pay for honest work."

"Out with him, Samuel!" ordered Gripp.

Samuel seized Dan by the shoulder, and attempted to obey orders, but our hero doubled him up with a blow from his fist, and the luckless clerk, faint and gasping, staggered and nearly fell.

Dan stepped out on the sidewalk, and raising his hat, said, with mock politeness, "Good-morning, gentlemen!" and walked away, leaving Gripp and his assistant speechless with anger.

"You're a couple of swindlers!" exclaimed Dan. "You won't pay for honest work." [Page 30.

CHAPTER IV.

AN ODD COUPLE.

When Dan's excitement was over, he felt that he had won a barren victory. He had certainly been badly treated, and was justified in yielding to his natural indignation; but for all that he had acted unwisely.

Nathan Gripp had not refused payment, he had only postponed it, and as he had the decided advantage, which money always has when pitted against labor, it would have been well to have been conciliatory. Now Gripp would undoubtedly annoy him with further delay, and refuse to give Mrs. Mordaunt any further work.

"I suppose I've acted like a fool," said Dan to himself, with compunction. "My spunk is always getting the better of me, and I am afraid poor mother will have to suffer. Well, there's no use crying for spilt milk; I must see what I can do to mend matters."

While these thoughts were passing through Dan's mind he found himself passing the clothing establish-

ment of Jackson & Co., who were special rivals of Mr. Gripp.

"Perhaps I can get some work for mother here," thought Dan. "I'll try, at any rate."

He entered, and looking about him, attracted the attention of a clerk.

"Do you want something in our line to-day?" asked the clerk, pleasantly.

"Yes, I do," said Dan, "if you're giving things away; but as I've got a note of ten thousand dollars to meet to-morrow, I can't pay anything out."

"Your credit ought to be good," said the salesman, smiling, "but we don't trust."

"All right," said Dan; "I may as well proceed to business. My mother makes vests for amusement. Can you give her any work?"

"I will speak to Mr. Jackson. One of our hands is sick, and if your mother understands how to do the work, we may be able to give her some."

The young man went to the rear of the store, and returned with the proprietor.

"Has your mother any experience?" asked the proprietor, a big man, with sandy whiskers.

He was an Englishman, as any one might see, and a decided improvement on Nathan Gripp, whom he cordially hated.

"Yes, sir; she has been making vests for the last two years."

"For whom has she been working?"

"For Nathan Gripp."

"Humph! Has Gripp discharged her?"

"No, sir; she has discharged him."

Mr. Jackson laughed, and nodded to his salesman. He rather enjoyed this allusion to his rival.

"Then she didn't like Gripp?"

"No, sir. He paid her starvation wages and made her wait for the money. He's a mean fellow."

"I don't admire him much myself," said the Englishman. "How much now did he pay for vest-making?"

"Twenty cents apiece."

"We don't pay much more ourselves. There is so much competition that we have to sell low."

"Mother would rather make for you at eighteen cents than for Gripp for twenty," said Dan.

Mr. Jackson was pleased, but he said, by way of drawing out Dan:

"How do you know but I am a mean skinflint, too?"

"You don't look like one," said the boy.

Mr. Jackson smiled graciously.

"Joseph," said he, "have we any vests ready for making?"

"Yes, sir. We have some bundles of half a dozen each."

"Take this boy's name and address and give him one. My boy, we will pay your mother twenty-five cents each, but we expect good work."

"You will be satisfied, sir," said Dan, confidently, and he left the store in excellent spirits.

"It's turned out right, after all," thought he; "but I am afraid we shall miss the money old Gripp owed mother. I don't know how we are going to pay the rent to-morrow. We shall be over two dollars short unless something turns up."

Dan carried the bundle of work home, and told his mother what had happened. She was pleased with the increase of pay, but that was in the future. It would be a week before she could collect any pay from Jackson & Co., and the landlord would not wait.

"I wish I could think of some way of raising money," said Dan, putting his face between his hands and looking thoughtful. "If you only had some jewels, mother, that we could raise money on now, we would be all right."

"I have nothing but my wedding-ring," said Mrs. Mordaunt, sadly.

"You must keep that, mother. Don't part with that unless you are obliged to."

"I would rather not, Dan, but if there is no other way——"

"There must be another way. I will find another way. Just don't think of it any more, mother. When does the landlord come?"

"Generally between twelve and one."

"Then we shall have all the forenoon to forage round in. It's only two dollars and a half we want. I ought to be able to raise two dollars and a half."

"That is a great deal of money to us now, Dan."

"I wonder whether Shorty wouldn't lend it to me?" said Dan, reflectively.

"Who is Shorty, my son?"

"He is a little hump-backed dwarf that keeps a cigar stand down on Broadway, not far from Trinity Church. He has a good trade, and doesn't waste his money. Yes, I will ask Shorty."

"I hope he will be willing to grant your request, Dan."

"I hope so, too. He's a good-natured fellow, Shorty is, and he'll do it, if he can. I'll see him the first thing to-morrow morning."

Somewhat cheered by Dan's confident tone, Mrs. Mordaunt went to sleep as early as usual, forgetting the trouble possibly in store.

The next morning, before selling his papers, Dan went round to Shorty's stand.

"Good-morning, Dan," said the dwarf, in a singularly melodious voice.

"Good-morning, Shorty. I thought I'd find you here."

"Yes, I begin business early."

"I am going to ask a favor of you," said Dan, abruptly.

"What is it, Dan?"

"Our rent's due to day, and we are two dollars and a half short. I can make the fifty cents before noon. Can you lend me two dollars till I am able to pay it?"

To Dan's dismay Shorty shook his head.

"I wish I could, Dan, but there's something in the way."

"If you're afraid I won't pay you back, you needn't think of that. I never went back on a fellow that lent me money yet."

"I am not afraid of trusting you, Dan, but I haven't got the money."

"I understand," said Dan, coldly, for he suspected this to be a subterfuge.

"No, you don't understand," said Shorty, eagerly. "You think what I say is a sham, but you wouldn't if you knew all."

"If I knew all," repeated Dan, surprised.

"Yes, I shall have to tell you. I didn't mean to, but I don't want you to misunderstand me. The fact

is, Dan," Shorty added, sheepishly, "I've got more than myself to provide for now."

"What? You don't mean to say?" ejaculated Dan.

"I was married yesterday, Dan," said the cigar dealer, almost apologetically, "and I've been buying furniture, and the fact is, I haven't got a cent to spare."

"Of course you haven't," said Dan. "I never dreamed of this. Is your wife—about your size?"

"No, Dan, she's rather tall. There she is, crossing the street. Do you see her?"

Dan looked, and saw a tall woman, of twenty-five or thereabouts, approaching the cigar stand. She was very plain, with a large mouth and a long, aquiline nose.

"That's my wife," said the cigar dealer, regarding his tall partner with evident pride. "Julia, my dear, this is my friend, Dan Mordaunt."

"Glad to see any friend of my husband," said the lady, in a deep, hoarse voice, which might have been mistaken for a man's. "He must come and see us."

"So I will, thank you," answered Dan, surveying the female grenadier with a wondering glance.

"We live at No. — Varick street, Dan, and I shall be very glad to see you any evening."

"By gracious!" said Dan to himself, "that's the queerest match I ever heard of. She might take

Shorty up in her arms and carry him off. I don't think he'll beat her very often," and Dan smiled at the thought.

The morning wore away, and at eleven o'clock Dan had earned forty cents. He began to get discouraged. There didn't seem to be much prospect of raising the rent before twelve o'clock.

CHAPTER V.

EFFECTING A LOAN.

As Dan stood on the sidewalk with his bundle of papers, and only forty cents toward the two dollars and a half required for the rent, he felt like many a business man who has a note to meet and not enough money on hand to pay it. Indeed, he was worse off, for generally business men have friends who can help them with a temporary loan, but Dan's friends were quite as poor as himself. One, however, Dick Stanton, a mere boy, had the reputation of being more saving than his companions. It was known that he had an account in the Bowery Savings Bank, and among the street boys he was considered wealthy.

"Perhaps I can borrow two dollars of him," thought Dan, as Dick passed him on his way to Canal street.

"I say, Dick," said Dan, "stop a minute. I want to speak to you."

"Go ahead, Dan."

"I want you to lend me two dollars. Our rent is due, and I can raise it all but that."

Dick shook his head, and was about to speak, when

Dan said hurriedly, for he felt that it was his last chance:

"You needn't be afraid of me, Dick; I'll pay you sure, and give you more interest, too, than you get in the bank."

"I haven't got any money in the bank, Dan."

"You had last week," said Dan, suspiciously.

"So I had, but I haven't now."

"You don't want to lend—that's what's the matter."

"You are mistaken, Dan. I'm not a bit afraid of lending to you, but I have lent my money already."

"Who to?" asked Dan, ungrammatically, falling into a mistake made by plenty of greater age and better experience than himself. "Of course it isn't any of my business," he added, "if you don't want to tell."

"I don't mind telling you, Dan. I've lent it to my aunt. She's got two children, and a hard time to get along. Perhaps I shall never see it again, but I couldn't refuse her."

"Of course you couldn't," said Dan, heartily. "You've done right, and you won't be sorry for it. I wish I knew some way of making two dollars before twelve o'clock."

"Are you in urgent need of two dollars, my boy?" asked a pleasant voice.

Dan turned, and met the face of the stranger introduced in the first chapter.

"Yes, sir," he answered. "I want it the worst way."

"Have you been extravagant and run up bills, Dan?"

"No, sir; the only bill we have is the rent, and that comes due this noon."

"How much is it?"

"Six dollars, sir."

"I thought you said you wanted to borrow *two* dollars."

"I've got four dollars toward it, sir."

"Do you often fall behind when rent day comes, Dan?"

"No, sir; this is the first time in two years."

"How do you account for it? Has business been duller than usual during the last month?"

"Yes, sir, I think it has. There hasn't been as much news in the papers, and my sales have fallen off. There's another thing, too."

"What is that?"

"Mother has a dollar and twenty cents due her, and she can't collect it."

"Is it for making vests?"

"Yes, sir. Mr. Gripp won't pay till she has made a full dozen."

"That seems inconsiderate."

"Oh, he's a mean fellow."

"I've a great mind to buy the debt of you."

"I wish you would, sir," said Dan, eagerly. "That would leave only sixty cents short, for I shall make ten cents more before twelve o'clock, it's likely."

"It is only half-past eleven. To put you quite at ease, I mean to lend you five dollars, and help you collect your mother's bill."

"You are very kind, sir," said Dan, surprised and grateful; "but I don't need so much."

"You may get short again when I am not here to assist you."

"Are you not afraid I shall never pay you, sir?"

"That thought won't keep me awake nights," said the gentleman, laughing.

"You sha'n't lose anything by me, sir; I promise you that," said Dan, earnestly.

"Then come into the hotel with me, and we will arrange the matter in a business-like way."

"All right, sir."

Dan followed his new friend into the Astor House, and up stairs into a pleasant bedroom, which in its comfortable apartments reminded Dan of the days before his father's failure.

"I wish I could live so again," he thought. "I don't like a tenement-house."

Mr. Grant—for this was his name—took writing materials from his valise, and seated himself at a table.

"I am going to draw up a note for you to sign," he said. "I probably understand better than you the necessary form."

"Thank you, sir."

His pen ran rapidly over the paper, and in a minute or two he handed Dan the following form of acknowledgment:

"NEW YORK, Sept. 15, 18—.

"For value received I promise to pay to Alexander Grant five dollars on demand with interest."

"Now," said Mr. Grant, "put your name at the bottom."

Dan did so.

"I added 'with interest,' but only as a form; I shall require none."

"I would rather pay it, sir."

"That may be as you please. How much will six per cent. interest make it amount to in a year?"

"Five dollars and thirty cents," answered Dan, promptly.

"Good! I see you have not forgotten what you learned in school."

"I have ciphered through cube root," said Dan, with some pride. "I am not sure whether I re-

member that now, but I could do any sum in square root."

"It is a pity you could not have remained in school."

"I should like to; but it's no use crying for spilt milk."

"As long as you didn't spill it yourself," added Mr. Grant.

"No, sir; it was not my fault that I had to leave school."

Mr. Grant folded up the note and carefully deposited it in his wallet.

"The next thing is to hand you the money," he said. "Shall I give you a five-dollar bill, or small bills?"

"Small bills, sir, if it is just as convenient."

Mr. Grant placed in Dan's hands two two-dollar bills and a one.

"One thing more," he said. "Give me an order on Mr. Gripp for the money due your mother. It is as well to have it in your own handwriting. I won't tell you how to write it. See if you can find a way."

Dan wrote an order, which Mr. Grant pronounced satisfactory.

"On the whole," said he, "I believe I will take you with me when I call upon Mr. Gripp. Can you call here at three o'clock this afternoon?"

"Yes, sir."

"That is settled, then. We will see whether Mr. Gripp will be any more polite to me than he was to you."

"He will be surprised to see me in your company," said Dan, laughing.

"It is a good thing to surprise the enemy, Dan. A surprise often leads to victory. When does your landlord call for his rent?"

"Between twelve and one."

"Then I won't detain you longer. Remember your appointment at three."

"I won't forget it, sir."

"Well, I'm in luck!" said Dan to himself, as he emerged into the street. "Who would have thought that a stranger would lend me so large a sum? He's a trump, and no mistake. Now, if I could only sell the four papers I have left before twelve o'clock. I don't want to get stuck on them."

Fortune was not tired of favoring Dan. In ten minutes he had sold his papers, and turned his steps toward the humble home where his mother was awaiting, not without anxiety, the visit of an unamiable landlord.

CHAPTER VI.

MORE THAN A MATCH.

Mrs. Mordaunt looked up anxiously as Dan entered the room. She had little expectation that he had been able in one morning to make up the large deficiency in the sum reserved for the rent, but there was a possibility, and she clung to that. Dan thought of postponing the relation of his good news, but when he saw his mother's anxious face, he felt that it would be cruel.

So when she said, "Well, Dan?" he nodded his head cheerfully.

"I've got it, mother," he said.

"Thank God for all His goodness!" ejaculated Mrs. Mordaunt, fervently.

"You see He hasn't forgotten us," said Dan, gleefully.

"No, my boy, it is a rebuke to my momentary want of faith. How could you raise so large a sum? Surely you did not earn it in one forenoon?"

"You're right there, mother. I'm not smart enough to earn two dollars before twelve o'clock."

"But you've got the money, Dan?"

"Look at this, mother," and Dan displayed the bills.

"Where did you get them, Dan?" asked his mother, astonished.

"I borrowed them."

"I didn't know we had a friend left, able or willing to lend us that sum."

"I borrowed them of Alexander Grant, of St. Louis, and gave my note for them," answered Dan, in a tone of some importance.

"Alexander Grant, of St. Louis! I don't remember that name."

"He's a new friend of mine, mother. I haven't known him over twenty-four hours. As the old friends have treated us so badly, I'm goin' in for new ones."

"You quite mystify me, Dan. Tell me all about it."

Dan did so.

"He's very kind to a stranger, Dan. Heaven will reward him, I am sure."

"I hope it will, mother. I wish I was a rich man. I should enjoy helping those who needed it. If I ever get rich—though it it doesn't look much like it now—I will do all the good I can. I wonder rich men don't do it oftener."

"It springs from thoughtlessness sometimes, Dan."

"And from selfishness pretty often," added Dan, whose views of human nature were considerably less favorable than they had been in his more prosperous days. "A good many men are like Tom Carver, as he is now and will be when he is grown up."

"Perhaps there are more good and generous men than we suppose, Dan," urged his mother, who liked to think well of her fellow-beings.

"Like Mr. Gripp and our landlord, for instance. By the way, I hear Mr. Grab's steps on the stairs. I want to deal with him. Just you step into the bedroom, mother."

Mrs. Mordaunt had no desire to meet Mr. Grab, but she was a little afraid of Dan's impetuous temper.

"You will treat him respectfully, won't you, Dan?" she urged, as she turned to go into the adjoining room.

Dan's eyes danced with fun.

"I'll treat him with all the respect he deserves, mother," he answered.

Mrs. Mordaunt looked a little doubtful, for she understood Dan, but did not say more, for Mr. Grab was already knocking at the door.

"Don't come out, whatever you hear, mother," said Dan, in a low voice. "I'll come out all right, though I shall tantalize him a little at first."

The knock was repeated.

"Come in!" Dan called out, in a loud, clear tone.

The door opened, and a thin, undersized man, with bushy red hair and the look of a cross mastiff, entered the room.

Before his entrance Dan had seated himself in the plain wooden rocking-chair with his feet on a cricket. He looked quite easy and unconcerned.

"How are you, Grab?" he said, in a friendly manner.

"You might call me *Mr.* Grab," returned the landlord, angrily.

"I've no objection, I'm sure, Mr. Grab," said Dan. "How is your health? You're looking very yellow. Got the jaundice?"

"I am perfectly well, and I am not yellow at all. Do you mean to insult me?" demanded Grab, irritated.

"I wouldn't do that for a cent, Mr. Grab. I am glad you feel well, though you ain't looking so. It's very friendly of you to come round to see me and mother."

"Where is your mother?" snapped Mr. Grab.

"She is engaged just now, and won't have the pleasure of seeing you."

"But I *must* see her."

"Must! You are quite mistaken. You can't see her. You can see me."

"I've seen more of you than I want to already," said Grab.

"That isn't talking like a friend, Mr. Grab," said Dan, "when I'm so glad to see you. Perhaps you have come on business."

"Of course I have come on business, and you know very well what that business is, you young monkey."

"Thank you, Mr. Grab, you are very complimentary. It isn't about the rent, is it?"

"Of course it is!" snapped the landlord.

"Oh, dear, how could I have forgotten that it was rent-day," said Dan, with well-feigned confusion.

Mr. Grab's brow grew dark. He concluded that he wasn't going to collect the rent, and that always chafed him.

"It's your business to know when rent-day comes," he said, bringing down his fist with such emphasis on the table that he hurt his knuckles, to Dan's secret delight.

"Please don't break the table, Grab," said Dan.

"Oh, blast the table!" said Grab, surveying his red knuckles.

"We haven't got any blasting powder, and I don't think it would be a very interesting experiment. It might blow you up, for you are nearest to it."

"Have done with this trifling, boy," said the landlord.

"I am afraid you got out of the wrong end of the bed this morning, Mr. Grab. You should control yourself."

"Look here, boy," said the landlord, savagely, "do you know what I am tempted to do?"

"No, what is it?" asked Dan, indifferently.

"I am strongly tempted to chastise you for your impudence."

Dan looked critically at the small, thin form, and secretly decided that Mr. Grab would find it difficult to carry out his threat.

"Oh, how you frighten me!" he said. "I don't believe I shall sleep any to-night."

Mr. Grab made a motion to pound on the table again, but he looked at his red knuckles and wisely forbore.

"I can't waste any more time," he said. "You must pay your rent, or turn out. I want six dollars."

"Won't it do, Mr. Grab, if we pay you next week?"

"No, it won't. The rent must be paid to-day, or out you go."

"Why doesn't Dan pay him?" thought Mrs. Mordaunt, uneasily. "Really, he ought not to tease the

poor man so. He has such a bad temper, he might hurt Dan."

"Mr. Gripp is owing mother for work. As soon as he pays her, I will call round at your office and pay you."

"It won't do," said Grab. "I won't let you stay here another night, and I mean to have security for my money, too."

So saying, the landlord seized the bundle of vests which lay on the table beside him.

This aroused Dan to action.

He sprang to his feet, his eyes flashing with anger.

"Put down that bundle, Mr. Grab!" he exclaimed.

"Then pay me my rent," said the landlord, recoiling a little.

"Put down that bundle before you say another word about rent. It isn't my mother's or mine. You have no business with it."

"What do you mean, boy, by your impudence?" demanded the landlord, a little uneasily.

"I mean that if you take that bundle from the room, I shall put you in charge of the nearest policeman on a charge of stealing."

"That is nonsense," said Grab; but he looked nervous, and laid down the bundle.

"All right, Grab," said Dan. "Now, as I don't

want any more of your company, I'll pay the rent, if you'll give me a receipt."

"Have you got the money?" asked Grab, astonished.

"Of course I have. I never told you I hadn't."

"You made me think so."

"It isn't my business what you think. There, that is settled, and now, Mr. Grab, I have the honor of wishing you good-evening. I hope you won't hurt your knuckles again."

Mr. Grab left the room, inwardly wishing that he could wring Dan's neck.

"Oh, Dan, how could you?" asked his mother, reproachfully, as she re-entered the room.

"He deserves it all," said Dan. "Didn't he turn out the poor Donovans on a cold day last winter? I have no pity for him."

"He may turn us out."

"Not as long as we pay the rent."

CHAPTER VII.

MR. GRIPP IS WORSTED.

Punctually at three o'clock Dan knocked at the door of Mr. Grant's room in the Astor House.

That gentleman looked at his watch as he admitted our hero.

"You are punctual to the minute," he said. "Your watch keeps excellent time."

"I'll tell you why," answered Dan, smiling. "I always keep it at Tiffany's. I don't dare to carry it for fear it will get out of order."

"You ought to have a watch," said Mr. Grant. "That will come in time."

"I hope so," said Dan. "Then I could be sure to keep my business appointments. Now I have to depend on the City Hall clock. I'd rather look at it than carry it round."

"Well, Dan, do you think Mr. Gripp is prepared to receive us?"

"He'll be glad to see you. He'll think you are going to buy some clothes. I don't think he'll be very happy to see me.'

"He must see us both, or neither. Has he any good clothes?"

"Yes, sir—good enough for me. I don't think you would like to patronize his establishment."

"By the way, Dan, you have given me an order for money, and I have not handed you the equivalent."

"You may not get the money, sir."

"I will make the effort at any rate. By the way, Dan, that coat of yours is getting shabby."

"It is the best I have, sir. Boys in my business don't have to dress much."

"That gives me an idea. Please hand me my hat, and we will start."

The two left the Astor House together. One or two of Dan's associates whom they encountered on the way, were surprised to see him walking on terms of apparent friendly companionship with a well-to-do stranger, but decided that Dan was probably acting as his guide.

They found Mr. Gripp standing as usual in the door-way of his shop watching for customers. He did not at first observe Dan, but his attention was drawn to Mr. Grant.

"Walk in, sir," he said, obsequiously. "You will find what you want here. Styles fashionable, and as for prices—we defy competition."

Alexander Grant paused, and looked critically about

him. He understood very well the sort of establishment he was about to enter, and would not have thought of doing so but in Dan's interests.

He stepped over the threshold, and Dan was about to follow, when the eagle eye of Mr. Gripp recognized our hero.

"Clear out, you young rascal!" he exclaimed. "Don't you come round here any more."

Dan did not answer, for he knew Mr. Grant would do so for him.

Mr. Grant turned back, and said, quietly:

"To whom are you speaking, sir?"

"I beg your pardon, sir—it's that boy."

"Then, sir, you will oblige me by stopping at once. That boy is in my company and under my protection."

Nathan Gripp stared as if transfixed.

"Do you know him, sir?" he asked.

"Yes, sir."

"You are mistaken in him, sir. He's an artful young rascal. He was here yesterday, and acted outrageously. He assaulted my clerk and insulted me."

"I have nothing to do with that. He is in my company, and if I enter the store he will."

"Oh, of course, if he's with you he can come in. Samuel, show the gentleman what he wants."

Dan smiled, and nothing but a sense of his own in-

terest prevented Mr. Gripp from objecting to his entrance.

"What will I show you, sir?" asked the callow young man named Samuel, glaring at Dan in vivid remembrance of the blow which had doubled him up.

"Have you any coats and vests that will fit this young gentleman?"

"Young gentleman!" repeated Samuel, mechanically, glancing at Dan in silent hatred.

"That means me, Samuel," said Dan, mischievously. "Samuel is an old friend of mine, Mr. Grant."

"I think we can fit him," said Samuel, by no means relishing the task of waiting upon his young opponent. "Take off your coat, young feller."

"Don't be too familiar, Samuel. You may call me Mr. Mordaunt," said Dan.

"I'll be —— if I do," muttered the young man.

Dan took off his coat, and tried on the one submitted to his inspection. He afterward tried on the vest, and they proved to be a good fit.

"Do they suit you, Dan?" asked Mr. Grant.

"Yes, sir, they fit as well as if they had been made for me."

"What is the price of these articles, young man?" asked Mr. Grant.

"Twelve dollars," answered Samuel.

"He'll take eight," suggested Dan, in a low voice.

Mr. Grant knew well enough the ways of Chatham street merchants to appreciate the suggestion.

"That is too high," he said, quietly.

Samuel, who was trained to read customers, after a glance at Mr. Grant's face, prepared to reduce the price.

"We might say eleven," he said, meditatively "Shall I put them up?"

"Not at that price."

"You don't want us to give 'em away?" said Samuel, in the tone of one whose reasonable demands had been objected to.

"There is no fear of that, I apprehend," returned Mr. Grant, dryly.

"I've no objection, I'm sure," remarked Dan, on his own account.

"I'd make a few remarks to you, young feller, if you were alone," he read in the eyes of the indignant salesman, and Dan enjoyed the restraint which he knew Samuel was putting upon himself.

"You are still asking too much," said the customer.

"What'll you give, sir?" asked Samuel, diplomatically.

"Eight dollars."

"Eight dollars! Why the cloth cost more than that!" protested Samuel.

"The work didn't cost you much, I presume."

"We pay the highest prices for work in this establishment, sir," said Samuel, hastily.

He forgot that Dan knew better.

"So they do, Mr. Grant," said Dan. "They pay twenty cents apiece for making vests."

"We pay more than that to our best hands," said Samuel.

"You told me you never paid more," retorted Dan.

Mr. Grant interrupted this discussion.

"Young man," said he, "I will give you eight dollars for the clothes."

"Say nine, sir."

"Not a cent more."

As the regular price was eight dollars—when they couldn't get any more—Samuel felt authorized to conclude the bargain without consulting Mr. Gripp.

"Shall I do up the clothes?" he asked.

"No," said Dan, "I'll wear 'em. You may put up my old ones."

Samuel felt it derogatory to his dignity to obey the orders of our hero, but there was no alternative.

The bundle was placed in Dan's hands.

"Now write me a receipt for the price," said Mr. Grant.

This was done.

Mr. Grant counted out six dollars and eighty cents.

"I have an order upon you for the balance," he said.

"I don't understand," ejaculated Samuel.

"Your principal owes my young friend, or his mother, one dollar and twenty cents for work. This you will receive as part of the price."

"I must see Mr. Gripp," said Samuel.

Mr. Gripp came forward frowning.

"We can't take the order, sir," he said. "The boy's money is not yet due."

"Isn't the work done and delivered?"

"Yes, sir; but it is our rule not to pay till a whole dozen is delivered."

"Then it is a rule which you must break," said Mr. Grant, firmly.

"We can't."

"Then I refuse to take the suit."

Nathan Gripp did not like to lose the sale on the one hand, or abdicate his position on the other.

"Tell your mother," he said to Dan, "that when she has finished another half-dozen vests I will pay her the whole."

He reflected that the stranger would be gone, and Dan would be in his power.

"Thank you," said Dan, "but mother's agreed to work for Jackson. He pays better."

"Then you'll have to wait for your pay," said Mr. Gripp, sharply.

"Don't you care to sell this suit?" asked Mr. Grant, quickly.

"Yes, sir, but under the circumstances we must ask all cash."

"You won't get it, sir."

"Then I don't think we care to sell," said Gripp, allowing his anger to overcome his interest.

"Very good. I think, Dan, we can find quite as good a bargain at Jackson's. Mr Gripp, do I understand that you decline to pay this bill?"

"I will pay when the other half-dozen vests are made," said Gripp, stubbornly.

"I have nothing to do with that. The bill is mine, and it is with me you have to deal. The boy has nothing to do with it."

"Is that so?" asked Gripp, in surprise.

"It is. You may take your choice. Settle the bill now, or I shall immediately put it in a lawyer's hands, who will know how to compel you to pay it."

A determined will carries the day.

"Take this gentleman's money, Samuel," said Gripp, in a tone of annoyance.

There was no further trouble. Dan walked out of

the store better dressed than he had been since the days of his prosperity.

"How can I thank you, Mr. Grant?" he said, gratefully.

"By continuing to care for your mother, my lad. You are lucky to have a mother living. Mine is dead, God bless her! Now, my lad, what do you think of my success in collecting bills?"

"You were too many for old Gripp, sir. He won't sleep to-night."

"He doesn't deserve to, for he grows rich by defrauding the poor who work for him."

Opposite the City Hall Park Dan and his friend separated.

"I shall not see you again, my boy," said Mr. Grant, "for I take the evening train. If you ever come to St. Louis, find me out."

"I will, sir."

"That's a good man," said Dan, as he wended his way homeward. "If there were more such, it would be good for poor people like mother and me. If I ever get rich, I mean to help along those that need it."

CHAPTER VIII.

MIKE RAFFERTY'S TRICK.

Dan carefully husbanded the money which Mr. Grant had lent him, and the result was that for two months he was comparatively easy in his circumstances. His mother earned five cents more daily, on account of the higher price she received for work, and though this was a trifle, it was by no means to be despised where the family income was so small as in the case of the Mordaunts.

Still Dan was not satisfied.

"Mother," said he, "I suppose I ought to be contented with earning enough to pay our expenses, but I should like to be saving something."

"Yes, Dan, it would be pleasant. But we ought to be thankful for what we are now receiving."

"But, mother, suppose I should fall sick? What should we do then?"

Mrs. Mordaunt shuddered.

"Don't mention such a thing, Dan," she said. "The very idea terrifies me."

"But it might happen, for all that."

"Don't you feel well, Dan? Is anything the matter with you?" asked Mrs. Mordaunt, anxiously.

"Don't be frightened, mother," answered Dan, laughing. "I'm as strong as a horse, and can eat almost as much. Still, you know, we would feel safer to have a little money in the savings-bank."

"There isn't much chance of that, Dan, unless we earn more than we do now."

"You are right there. Well, I suppose there is no use thinking of it. By the way, mother, you've got enough money on hand to pay the rent to-morrow, haven't you?"

"Yes, Dan, and a dollar over."

"That's good."

The door of the room was partly open, and the last part of the conversation was heard by Mike Rafferty, the son of the tenant who occupied the room just over the Mordaunts. He was a ne'er-do-well, who had passed more than one term of imprisonment at Blackwell's Island. His mother was an honest, hard-working washerwoman, who toiled early and late to support herself and her three children. Mike might have given her such assistance that she could have lived quite comfortably, for her own earnings were by no means inconsiderable. Her wash-tub paid her much more than Mrs. Mordaunt's needle could possibly win, and she averaged a dollar a day where her

more refined neighbor made but twenty-five cents. But Mike, instead of helping, was an additional burden. He got his meals regularly at home, but contributed scarcely a dollar a month to the common expenses. He was a selfish rowdy, who was likely to belong permanently to the shiftless and dangerous classes of society.

Mike had from time to time made approaches to intimacy with Dan, who was nearly two years younger, but Dan despised him for his selfishly burdening his mother with his support, and didn't encourage him. Naturally, Mike hated Dan, and pronounced him "stuck up" and proud, though our hero associated familiarly with more than one boy ranking no higher in the social scale than Mike Rafferty.

Only the day before, Mike, finding himself out of funds, encountering Dan on the stairs, asked for the loan of a quarter.

"I have no money to spare," answered Dan.

"You've got money, Dan; I saw you take out some a minute ago."

"Yes, I've got the money, but I won't lend it."

"You're a mane skinflint," said Mike, provoked.

"Why am I?"

"Because you've got the money, and you won't lend it."

"What do you want to do with it?"

"I want to go to the Old Bowery to-night, if you must know."

"If you wanted it for your mother I might have lent it to you, though I need all I can earn for my own mother."

"It's for my mother I want it, thin," said Mike. "I guess I won't go to the theater to-night."

"That's too thin. Your mother would never see the color of it."

"Won't you lend me, thin?"

"No, I can't. If you want money, why don't you earn it, as I do?"

"I ain't lucky."

"It isn't luck. If you go to work and sell papers or black boots, you will be able to help your mother and pay your way to the theater yourself."

"Kape your advice to yourself," said Mike, sullenly. "I don't want it."

"You'd rather have my money," said Dan, good-humoredly.

"I'll never see that. You're too mane."

"All right. I'll be *mane*, then."

"I'd like to put a head on you," muttered Mike.

"I've got one already. I don't need another," said Dan.

"Oh, you think you're mighty smart wid your jokes," said Mike.

Dan smiled and walked off, leaving Mike more his enemy than ever.

This was the boy who overheard Mrs. Mordaunt say that she had more than the rent already saved up. Mike's cupidity was excited. He knew that it must amount to several dollars, and this he felt would keep him in cigarettes and pay for evenings at the theater for several days.

"I wish I had it," he said to himself. "I wonder where the ould woman kapes it."

The more Mike thought of it the more he coveted this money, and he set to work contriving means to get possession of it.

Finally he arranged upon a plan.

About three o'clock in the afternoon he knocked at Mrs. Mordaunt's door. She answered the knock in person.

"Mike Rafferty!" she said, in surprise. "Won't you come in?"

"Oh, no; I can't. It's bad news I bring you about Dan."

"What is it? Tell me quick, in Heaven's name!" she exclaimed, her heart giving a great bound.

"He's been run over, ma'am, by a hoss, in front of the Astor House, and they took him into the drug store at the corner. He wants you to go right over."

"Is he—badly hurt?" asked the agonized mother.

"I guess he's broke his leg," said Mike.

In two minutes Mrs. Mordaunt, trembling with apprehension, her faltering limbs almost refusing to bear her weight, was on her way to the Astor House.

As Mike had calculated, she did not stop to lock the door.

The young scape-grace entered the deserted room, rummaged about till he found the scanty hoard reserved for the landlord, and then went off whistling.

"Now I'll have a bully time," he said to himself. "Didn't I fool the ould woman good?"

CHAPTER IX.

MIKE'S THEFT IS DISCOVERED.

Dan was standing in front of the Astor House, talking to a boy acquaintance, when his mother tottered up to him in a state of great nervous agitation.

"Why, mother, what's the matter?" asked Dan, in surprise. "What brings you out this afternoon?"

"Oh, Dan!" she gasped, "are you hurt?"

Dan opened his eyes in wonder. It occurred to him that his mother must have lost her mind.

"Hurt!" he repeated.

"Yes; they told me you were run over, and had your leg broken."

"My leg broken! Who told you so?"

"Mike Rafferty."

"Then I wish I had him here," said Dan, indignantly; I'd let him know whether my leg is broken or not. You bet I would!"

"Haven't you been run over, then?"

"Not that I know of, and I guess it couldn't be done without my knowing it."

"I am so glad, so relieved!" sighed Mrs. Mor-

daunt. "I don't know how I got here, I was so agitated."

"When did Mike Rafferty tell you this cock-and-bull story, mother?" asked Dan.

"Only a few minutes ago. He said you had been taken into a drug store, and wanted me to come right over."

"It's a mean trick he played on you, mother," said Dan, indignantly. "I don't see what made him do it."

"Nor I," said Mrs. Mordaunt. "He must have meant it as a joke."

"A pretty poor joke. I'll get even with him for that."

"I don't mind it now, Dan, since I have you safe. I am ready to forgive him. He didn't know how much he was distressing me."

"Then he ought to have known. You may forgive him if you want to; I sha'n't."

"I will go home now, Dan. I feel a good deal happier than I did when I was hurrying over here."

"I will go with you, mother. I have sold my papers, and sha'n't work any more this afternoon. Where did you leave Mike? I hope I can come across him soon."

"I left him at the door of our room."

"Did you lock the door when you came away, mother?" asked Dan.

"No; I believe not."

"Then let us go home at once. Some one might get in."

"There isn't much to take, Dan," said Mrs. Mordaunt, with a faint smile.

"There is our rent money, mother."

"I didn't think of that."

"We shall be in a pretty pickle if that is lost."

"You don't think Mike would take it do you, Dan?"

"I think he would if he knew where to find it."

"I wish I had brought it with me," said Mrs. Mordaunt, in a tone of anxiety.

"Don't fret, mother; I guess it's all right."

"Perhaps you had better go home at once without waiting for me, Dan. You can go quicker."

"All right; I'll do it. Where is the money?"

"In my pocket-book, in the drawer of the work-table."

"Are the drawers locked?"

"No."

"Then hereafter you'd better lock them. Well, I'll be off, and will meet you at the room."

Dan was not long in reaching his humble home. The more he thought of it, the more he distrusted

Mike, and feared that he might have had a sinister design in the deception he had practiced upon his mother. To lose the rent money would be a serious matter. Mr. Grab hated him, he knew full well, and would show no mercy, while in the short time remaining it would be quite impossible to make up the necessary sum.

Dan sprang up the stairs, several at a bound, and made his way at once to the little work-table. He pulled the drawer open without ceremony, and in feverish haste rummaged about until, to his great joy, he found the pocket-book.

His heart gave a joyous bound.

"It's all right, after all," he said. "Mike isn't so bad as I thought him."

He opened the pocket-book, and his countenance fell. There was a twenty-five cent scrip in one of the compartments, and that was all.

"He's stolen the money, after all," he said, his heart sinking. "What are we going to do now?"

He waited till his mother reached home. She looked inquiringly at him. One glance told her what had happened.

"Is it gone, Dan?" she gasped.

"That is all that is left," answered Dan, holding up the scrip.

"Mike could not be wicked enough to take it."

"Couldn't he, though? You don't know him as I do, mother. He's a mean thief, and he sent you off to have a clear field. I wish you had locked the door."

"I couldn't think of that, or anything else, Dan, when I thought you were hurt."

"That's why he told you."

"What can we do, Dan? Mr. Grab will be angry when he finds we can't pay him."

"I will try to find Mike; and if I do, I will get the money if I can. That's the first thing."

Dan went up stairs at once, and knocked at Mrs. Rafferty's door.

She came to the door, her arms dripping with suds, for she had been washing.

"Is it you, Dan?" she said. "And how is your mother the day?"

"Is Mike in?" asked Dan, abruptly, too impatient to answer the question.

"No; he went out quarter of an hour ago."

"Did he tell you where he was going, Mrs. Rafferty?"

"Yes, he did. He said he was going over to Brooklyn to see if he could get a job, shure. Did you want him?"

"Yes, I did, Mrs. Rafferty. I'm sorry to tell you that Mike has played a bad trick on my mother."

"Oh, whirra, whirra, what a bye he is!" wailed Mrs. Rafferty. "He's always up to something bad. Sorra bit of worruk he does, and I at the wash-tub all day long."

"He's a bad son to you, Mrs. Rafferty."

"So he is, Dan, dear. I wish he was like you. And what kind of trick has he played on your good mother?"

"He told her that I had been run over and broken my leg. Of course she went out to find me, thinking it was all true, and while she was away he took the money from her pocket-book."

Some mothers would have questioned this statement, but Mrs. Rafferty knew to her cost that Mike was capable of stealing, having been implicated in thefts on several occasions.

"Was it much, Dan?" she asked.

"Six or seven dollars. I can't say just how much."

"Oh, what a bad bye! I don't know what to do wid him, shure."

"It was the money we were to pay our rent with to-morrow," continued Dan. "It is a very serious matter."

"I wish I could make it up to you, Dan, dear. It's a shame it is."

"You are an honest woman, Mrs. Rafferty, but you

ought not to make it up. I wish I could find Mike. Do you think he has really gone to Brooklyn."

"Shure, I don't know. He said so."

"He might have done it as a blind, just to put me on the wrong scent."

"So he might, shure."

"Well, Mrs. Rafferty, I can't stop any longer. I'll try to find him."

He went down stairs and told his mother what he had discovered or failed to discover.

"Don't wait supper for me, mother," he said. "I'm going in search of Mike."

"You won't fight with him, Dan?" said Mrs. Mordaunt, anxiously.

"I can't promise, mother. I will only agree to be prudent. I am not going to submit to the loss without trying to get the money back, you may be sure of that."

So Dan went down stairs, considerably perplexed in mind. Mike was sure to keep out of the way for a time at least, anticipating that Dan would be upon his track. While our hero was searching for him, he would have plenty of opportunities of spending the money of which he had obtained unlawful possession. To punish him without regaining the contents of the lost pocket-book would be an empty triumph. In the

street below Dan espied Terence Quinn, an acquaintance of Mike.

"How are you, Terence?" he said. "Have you seen anything of Mike?"

"I saw him only a few minutes ago."

"Where did he go?"

"I don't know."

"I want to see him on business."

"I'll tell you where he'll be this evening."

"Where?"

"He's going to the Old Bowery, and I'm goin' wid him."

"Does he treat?"

"Yes."

"Where did he get the money?"

"He didn't tell me," said Terence.

"He's taken the rent money. I'm sure of it now," said Dan to himself. "I wish I knew where to find him."

CHAPTER X.

DAN AS A DETECTIVE.

Dan quickly decided that if Mike had been going to Brooklyn, he would not have announced it under the circumstances.

"He meant to send me there on a wild-goose chase," he reflected. "I am not quite so green as he takes me to be."

Dan could not decide as easily where Mike had gone. Hood says in his poem of "The Lost Heir,"

"A boy as is lost in London streets is like a needle in a bundle of hay."

A hunt for a boy in the streets of New York is about equally hopeless. But Dan did not despair.

"I'll just stroll round a little," he said to himself. "Maybe I'll find him."

Dan bent his steps toward the Courtlandt-street Ferry.

"Perhaps Mike has gone to Jersey City," he said to himself. "Anyway, I'll go over there."

It was not an expensive journey. Six cents would defray Dan's expenses both ways, and he was willing

to incur this expense. He meant to look about him, as something might turn up by which he could turn an honest penny.

Something did turn up.

Near him in the cabin of the ferry-boat sat a gentleman of middle age, who seemed overloaded with baggage. He had two heavy carpet-bags, a satchel, and a bundle, at which he looked from time to time with a nervous and uncomfortable glance. When the boat touched shore he tried to gather his various pieces of luggage, but with indifferent success. Noticing his look of perplexity, Dan approached him, and said, respectfully:

"Can't I assist you, sir?"

"I wish you would, my boy," said the gentleman, relieved.

"All right, sir. I'll take one of the carpet-bags and the satchel, if you like."

"Thank you; that will do nicely."

So the two left the boat together.

"Where are you going, sir?" asked Dan.

"Do you know the wharf of the Cunard steamers?" asked the gentleman.

"Yes, sir."

"Is it far off?"

"Not more than five or six minutes' walk," answered Dan.

"Can you help me as far as that with my luggage?"

"Yes, sir."

"I will make it worth your while, and you will be doing me a great favor besides. I was brought down to the ferry, but the rascally hackman demanded five dollars more to carry me across and land me at the Cunard pier. He thought I would have to submit to this imposition, but I was so indignant that I tried to handle all my luggage myself. I don't know how I should have managed without you."

"I won't charge you so much, sir," said Dan, smiling.

"It isn't for the money I cared so much as for the imposition. I would rather pay you ten dollars than the hackman five."

"Be careful, sir," said Dan, smiling, "or I may take advantage of your liberal offer."

The gentleman smiled in turn.

"You don't look like a boy that would take advantage of a traveler."

"You can't judge from appearances, sir. I have been robbed of six dollars to-day, and I might try to make it up that way."

"You have been robbed! How?"

Dan briefly related the circumstances.

"Was it all the money your mother had?"

"Yes, sir."

"How did you happen to be coming across the ferry?"

"I thought Mike might be here somewhere."

By this time they were in sight of the Cunard wharf.

"Were you ever on a Cunard steamer?" asked the gentleman.

"No, sir."

"Help me on board with my luggage, and I will show you about."

"I thought the steamers generally left in the morning," said Dan.

"So they do; but to-day the tide did not serve till later."

Dan helped Mr. Stevens down below with his luggage, and assisted him in storing them in his stateroom. He surveyed with interest the cabin, the deck, the dining-saloon, and the various arrangements.

"Well," said the gentleman, smiling, "how do you like it?"

"First-rate, sir."

"Do you think you would like to be going with me?"

"Yes, sir, but for my mother."

"Of course, it won't do to desert her; otherwise I might be tempted to make you an offer. I am sure you would be very useful to me."

"I should like it very much, if mother did not need me."

Dan went up stairs with Mr. Stevens, and remained till visitors were warned that it was time to go ashore.

"I must go, sir," he said.

Mr. Stevens drew a five-dollar bill from his vest pocket and handed it to Dan.

"I haven't any change, sir," said Dan.

"None is required," said the gentleman, smiling.

"Do you really mean to give me five dollars, sir?"

"That is what the hackman wanted to charge me."

"But it was too much."

"It was too much for him; it is not too much for you, if I am willing to give it to you."

"You are very kind, sir," said Dan, almost doubting the reality of his good fortune.

"It will prove that I spoke truly when I said I didn't care for the amount of money, only for the imposition. I am really very glad to give it to you. Good-by, my boy."

He offered his hand. Dan shook it heartily, and, wishing him a pleasant voyage, descended the gangplank.

"That is almost as much as Mike robbed me of," he said to himself. "How lucky I came over to Jersey City! Now, if I could only get back part of

the money Mike robbed me of, I should be the better off for his mean trick."

Dan did not immediately return to New York. He had been so fortunate that he decided to spend the rest of the afternoon as he liked.

He walked on for ten minutes, Mike being temporarily out of his mind, when his attention was suddenly drawn to him. Just in front of him he saw Mike himself swaggering along, with a ten-cent cigar in his mouth, and both hands thrust deep in his trousers pockets. He was strolling along in fancied security, not dreaming of the near presence of the boy whom he had so meanly robbed.

Dan's eyes sparkled when he recognized his enemy, and hastening his pace, he put his hand on Mike's shoulder.

Mike turned quickly, and his countenance changed when he saw Dan.

"Has he found it out?" suggested his guilty conscience. "Anyway, he can't prove anything. I'll bluff him off."

"Hallo, Dan!" he said, in affected cordiality. "What brings you over here?"

"What brings *you* over here, Mike?" asked Dan, significantly.

"I'm looking for a job," said Mike.

"You look like it," retorted Dan, "with both

hands in your pockets and a cigar in your mouth! Times seem to be good with you. How much did that cigar cost?"

"I don't know," answered Mike, with unblushing falsehood. "A man gave it to me for holdin' his hoss."

Mike was never at a loss for a plausible lie.

"I thought you bought it."

"I haven't got any money."

"Did they let you over they ferry free, then?"

"Oh, I had money enough for that."

"I guess you have got more."

"No, I haven't. Ten cents was all I had."

"Then how are you going to take Terence Quinn to the theater to-night?" asked Dan.

Even Mike's brazen effrontery was hardly prepared to meet this unexpected question.

"What do you mane?" he stammered.

"Terence told me you had invited him."

"Then he lies!" said Mike, his self-assurance returning. "He invited me."

"Look here, Mike Rafferty," said Dan, out of patience; "that won't go down! Terence told the truth. I know where you got the money you were going to treat him with."

"Where, then?"

"From my mother's pocket-book."

"It's a lie!" blustered Mike.

"It's the truth, and if you don't hand over what's left without making any more trouble, I'll have you arrested."

"You can't. We're in Jersey——"

"I shall have you arrested as soon as you get home."

"I didn't take the money," said Mike, sullenly.

"You did, and you know it," said Dan, firmly. "Give me what you have left, and I'll make no trouble about it. If you don't, you're booked for another term at the island."

Mike tried to save his ill-gotten gains, but Dan was persistent, and finally extracted from him four dollars and a half. The rest Mike pretended he had spent. He was sly enough, however, to have saved enough to take him to the Old Bowery.

On the whole, Dan was satisfied, considering the five dollars he had received on the Cunard steamer, but he could not forbear giving Mike a farewell shot.

"How did it happen, Mike, that you took the Jersey Ferry to Brooklyn?"

Mike did not deign a reply.

"That is my first appearance as a detective," thought Dan. "It seems to pay."

CHAPTER XI.

DAN HAS ANOTHER ADVENTURE.

It was only five o'clock when Dan, returning from Jersey City, found himself again in front of the Astor House.

"Shall I buy any evening papers?" Dan asked himself. "No, I won't. I've made enough to satisfy me for one day."

Dan stood at the corner of Vesey street, glancing at the hurrying crowds.

He rather enjoyed his temporary freedom from business cares.

He had made a good day's work, the morrow's rent was provided for, and he felt like a gentleman of leisure.

All at once his attention was drawn to a low sob. It proceeded from a little flower-girl of ten years, who usually stood near the hotel.

"What's the matter, Fanny?" asked Dan, calling her by her name, for the little flower-girl was one of his acquaintances. "Haven't you sold as many bouquets as usual?"

"Yes," said Fanny, pausing in her sobs, "I've sold more."

"Then what's the matter? Has any one been teasing you?"

"No, but a young man passed a bad half-dollar on me."

"Let me see it."

Dan inspected the piece. He did not need to ring it, for it was dull in appearance and unmistakably bad.

"When did you take it?"

"Just now. A young man came up and bought a five-cent bouquet, and gave me this to change."

"Didn't you see that it was bad?"

"I didn't look at it till afterward. Then it was too late."

"So you gave him forty-five cents in good money, Fanny?"

"Yes," said the little girl, again beginning to sob.

"How many bouquets had you sold?"

"Seven."

"Then you have less money than when you began?"

"Yes, Dan."

"Do you think the fellow knew the piece was bad?"

"Yes, for he hurried away."

"Which way did he go?"

"Down Broadway."

"Maybe he was going to Jersey City."

"No, I saw him turn down Fulton street."

"Then he was going to Brooklyn. How did he look?"

"He was short and had red hair."

"How was he dressed?"

"He had on a gray suit."

"How long ago did this happen?"

"About five minutes."

"Give me the bad piece, and I'll go after him. Stay here till I come back."

Dan seized the money, and proceeded toward Fulton Ferry at a half run.

"I hope he won't have taken the boat," he said to himself. "If he has I shall lose him."

Dan nearly overthrew an apple woman's stand not far from the ferry, but did not stop to apologize. He ran into a fat gentleman who looked daggers at him, but kept on.

Breathless he paid his ferriage, and just succeeded in catching a boat as it was leaving the New York pier.

Thus far he had not seen the young man of whom he was in search.

"He may be on board the boat. I'll go forward," said Dan to himself.

He walked through the ladies' cabin, and stepped out on the forward deck. The boat was crowded, for it was at the time when men who live in Brooklyn, but are employed in New York, are returning to their homes.

Dan looked about him for a time without success, but all at once his eyes lighted up. Just across the deck, near the door of the gentlemen's cabin, stood a young man with red hair, holding a small bouquet in his hand. His face was freckled, his eyes small, and he looked capable of meanness.

Of course appearances are often deceptive, but not unfrequently a man's character can be read upon his face.

"That's the fellow that cheated poor Fanny, I'll bet a hat," Dan decided within himself. "He looks like it."

He immediately crossed to the other side of the deck.

The red-headed young man was talking to another young man of about the same age.

"Where did you get that bouquet, Sanderson?" asked the latter.

"Bought it of a little girl in front of the Astor House," answered Sanderson.

"That settles it," thought Dan.

He waited to hear what would come next.

"I suppose it is meant for some young lady," suggested the other.

"Maybe it is," answered Sanderson, with a grin.

Dan thought it was about time to come to business. He touched the red-haired young man on the arm.

Sanderson looked round.

"Well, boy, what is it?" he asked.

"You bought that bouquet of a girl near the Astor House," said Dan.

"What if I did?" asked Sanderson, uneasily, for he had a suspicion of what was coming.

"You gave her a bogus half-dollar in payment," continued Dan.

"Do you mean to insult me?" blustered Sanderson. "Be off with you."

"I am sorry I cannot accommodate you," said Dan, "but I want you to give me a good piece for this first."

"I never saw that half-dollar before," said Sanderson. "I gave her good money."

"Perhaps you can prove that before the court," said Dan.

"What do you mean?" demanded Sanderson, uneasily.

"I mean that you have passed counterfeit money, and unless you give me a good piece for it I will give

you in charge as soon as we reach the pier," said Dan, firmly.

Sanderson looked about him, and saw that the boy's charge was believed. Soon his friend looked disgusted. Dan followed up his attack.

"Fanny is a poor girl," he said. "I found her crying over her loss, for it was more than all the money she had taken to-day."

"Are you her friend?" asked Sanderson, sneering.

"Yes, I am," said Dan, stoutly.

"This is a put-up job between you two," said Sanderson.

"Gentlemen," said Dan, turning and appealing to the passengers near him, "this young man has passed a bad fifty-cent piece on a poor flower-girl. Shall he make it good?"

"Yes, yes!" exclaimed half a dozen, and several cried "shame!" with looks of scorn and disgust directed toward the young man with red hair.

"I don't believe a word of it," he ejaculated, in a rage. "I gave the girl a quarter."

"Too thin!" said several.

"But I'll give you the money to get rid of you," and he threw a half-dollar at Dan with a look very far from amiable.

"Thank you, sir; here's your money," said Dan.

Though Sanderson had disclaimed all knowledge of

the bogus half-dollar, he took it and put it carefully in his pocket.

"Keep it to pay your washerwoman with," said a jeering voice.

It was a young fellow in the garb of a workman who spoke.

The boat touched the pier, and Sanderson was only too glad to hurry away from the unfriendly crowd.

"You're a smart boy!" cried a keen-looking business man, addressing Dan. "How did you discover that this fellow was the one that passed the coin."

"Fanny described him to me."

"Then you hadn't seen him before?"

"No, sir."

"What are you doing for a living?"

"Selling papers, sir."

"You are fit for something better. Come and see me to-morrow."

He placed in Dan's hands a card bearing the firm's name.

BARTON & ROGERS,
Commission Merchants,
No. — Pearl street.

"My name is Rogers," he continued. "Inquire for me."

"Thank you, sir."

Dan was so pleased at having recovered Fanny's

money that he gave little thought to this last incident, though it was destined to exert an important influence on his fortunes. He took the same boat back to New York, and hurried to the Astor House.

Little Fanny, the flower-girl, with a sad look upon her face, was still standing in her wonted place.

"I've got your money back, Fanny," said Dan.

"Oh, have you?" exclaimed Fanny, joyfully.

"Yes; I made the fellow give it up."

"Oh, how kind you are, Dan!"

There was a listener to what passed between the two children. A tall lady, standing at the corner of the street, regarded them attentively. She was evidently revolving some plan in her head. As Dan was about turning away, she placed her hand on his arm.

"Young man," she said, "I want to speak to you."

"All right, ma'am," said Dan, surprised.

CHAPTER XII.

A MYSTERIOUS LADY.

Dan thought it probable that the lady who accosted him might wish to send him on an errand, and his surprise vanished. She was tall, slender, and grave in appearance. She was probably not over thirty-five. Her first words renewed Dan's surprise.

"Have you a mother living?"

"Yes, ma'am."

"A father?"

"No, ma'am."

"Are you an only child, or have you brothers and sisters?"

"There is only one of me," answered Dan, humorously.

"I suppose you are poor?"

"If I were not, I would not sell papers for a living."

"Probably you live in a poor place?"

"Yes," answered Dan, beginning to be tired of satisfying what might be only curiosity on the part of the lady. She noticed at once the change in his manner.

"I am not making these inquiries out of curiosity," she said, quickly. "I have an object in what I ask."

This naturally surprised Dan the more.

"All right, ma'am," he said; "I am ready to answer."

"Are you at leisure for an hour or two?" asked the lady.

Dan hesitated.

"I suppose mother will be worried if I don't come home to supper," he said, hesitating.

"Can't you send her a message not to expect you? Does this little girl know where you live?"

"Yes," answered Fanny, readily.

To her the lady turned.

"Little girl," she said, "go at once and tell this boy's mother that he will not be home till nine o'clock. Say he is called away by business."

"Yes, ma'am."

"This will pay you for your trouble."

The little girl's eyes sparkled with joy as the lady placed fifty cents in her hand.

"Thank you. How glad mother will be?" she said.

As for Dan, he was puzzled to conjecture what the lady could want of him. What would justify such a handsome compensation to Fanny merely to explain his absence to his mother?

"Now," said the lady, "if you will hail the next stage we will go up town."

They had not long to wait. Soon they were rattling over the pavements through thronged Broadway. It was two years since Dan had been in a Broadway stage. He could not afford to pay ten cents for a ride, but when it was absolutely necessary rode in a horse-car for half price.

Dan looked about him to see if he knew any one in the stage. Nearly opposite sat his former schoolmate, Tom Carver, with a young lady at his side. Their glances met, and Dan saw Tom's lip curl with scorn. Of course he did not betray any mark of recognition.

"I like riding in a Broadway stage," he heard the young lady say. "There is more to see as you go along. Besides, the company is more select."

"Not always," said Tom, with a significant glance at Dan.

Dan felt indignant, but was too proud to show it.

"The price excludes the lower classes from using the stage," said the young lady.

"It ought to, but I have seen a newsboy in a stage."

"How can they afford to pay ten cents for riding?"

"I give it up," said Tom, shrugging his shoulders.

The lady who was with Dan noticed the direction of Tom Carver's look.

"Do you know that boy?" she asked.

"Yes," answered Dan, "I used to know him."

"Why don't you know him now?"

"Because my father lost his property."

"I see," said the lady. "It is the way of the world. Don't mind it."

"I don't," said Dan, promptly, returning Tom Carver's stare.

Tom could not help hearing this conversation, and learned for the first time that Dan and the handsomely dressed lady beside him were in company.

"What can they have to do with each other?" he asked himself, curiously. "She can't be a relation —she is too handsomely dressed."

At this moment the young lady beside him dropped her handkerchief. Before Tom could stoop to pick it up Dan had handed it to her with a polite bow.

"Thank you," said the young lady, with a pleasant smile.

"You needn't have troubled yourself," said Tom Carver, irritated. "This young lady is under *my* charge."

"It is no trouble, I assure you," answered Dan.

"He is very polite," said the young lady, in a low voice, "and very good-looking, too," she added, with a second look at Dan.

"He is only a common newsboy," said Tom, not relishing Julia Grey's tribute to a boy he disliked.

"I can't help what he is," said the young lady, independently; "he looks like a gentleman."

Dan could not help catching the drift of their conversation, and his face flushed with pleasure, for Julia was a very pretty girl, but not being addressed to him, he could not take notice of it otherwise.

"He lives at the Five Points somewhere," muttered Tom.

The young lady seemed rather amused at Tom's discomposure, and only smiled in reply.

The stage kept on till it reached Madison square.

"Will you pull the strap opposite the Fifth Avenue Hotel?" said the lady, addressing Dan.

Dan did so.

He got out first, and helped his companion out.

"Follow me into the hotel," she said.

Dan did so.

"What is your name?" asked the lady, as they ascended the stairs.

"Dan Mordaunt."

"I needn't ask if you have a good mother?" she proceeded.

"One of the best," said Dan, promptly.

"You look like a well-bred boy, and I infer that

your mother is a lady. Come into the parlor. I wish to speak to you on business."

Dan followed her, wondering, and she signed to him to take a seat on the sofa beside her.

"You have already told me that you have no sister," she began.

"No, ma'am."

"Do you think your mother would enjoy the society of a little girl?"

"I think she would."

"I have a little girl under my charge—my niece—from whom, for reasons unnecessary to state, I am obliged to part for a time. Do you think your mother would be willing to take charge of her? Of course I would make it worth her while."

"I am sure she would like it," said Dan, for he saw at a glance that this would be a very desirable arrangement for them.

"Then you feel authorized to accept the charge in your mother's name?"

"I do."

"The little girl is five years old. Your mother would be willing to teach her until such time as she may be old enough to go to school?"

"Oh, yes, ma'am."

"I think little girls are best off at home until the age of seven or eight."

"There is one objection," said Dan.

"What is that?" asked the lady, quickly.

"We live in a poor room and a poor neighborhood."

"That objection can be obviated. I shall pay you enough to enable you to take better rooms."

Dan heard this with satisfaction.

"I may as well be explicit," said the lady. "I propose to pay fifty dollars a month for my ward's board, including, of course, your mother's care."

"Fifty dollars a month!" repeated Dan, astonished.

"If you consider that sufficient."

"I am afraid it won't be worth it," said Dan, frankly.

"If Althea is well cared for, as I am sure she will be, I shall have no fear of that. Let me add that I shall allow your mother ten dollars per month extra for the child's clothing—say sixty dollars in all. For the present that will probably be enough."

"Oh, yes, I should think so," said Dan. "When do you want her to come to us?"

"Now. You will take her back with you."

"To-night?" asked Dan, startled.

"Yes, to-night. I must leave New York early to-morrow. In fact, I leave the city by an early train."

"She would have to come to our poor lodgings," said Dan, hesitatingly.

"One night there won't matter. To-morrow you can secure rooms up town."

"Yes, ma'am, I will. Our month expires to-morrow."

"Now," said the lady, rising, "since the matter is settled, come up stairs with me, and I will show you the child."

Dan followed the lady up stairs, feeling as if he were in a dream, but a very pleasant one.

CHAPTER XIII.

ALTHEA.

As the lady entered the room a little girl, with an expression of joy, ran from the window from which she had been looking, and took her hand.

"I'm so glad you've got home, auntie," she said. "I got tired of being alone."

"I staid away longer than I intended, Althea," said the lady. "I was afraid you would feel lonely."

"I was *very* lonely. I wanted to go out into the hall and play with a little girl that lives in the next room, but I thought you wouldn't find me."

"I am glad you did not. I have brought you a playfellow, Althea."

This drew the little girl's attention to Dan. Unlike most girls of her age, she was not bashful.

"What is his name?" she asked.

"Dan."

"What a funny name! Are you going to live with us, Dan?"

"You are coming to live with me," said Dan, smiling.

"Will you be my brother?"

"Yes."

"And will you play with me?"

"Sometimes."

"I think I shall like you. You are nice-looking," said Althea, in a matter-of-fact tone.

Dan blushed. He found the compliment agreeable, though it came from a little girl.

"So are you, Althea," he said.

"I don't think I am," said Althea. "I've black hair, and my skin is dark. You have nice brown hair, and are whiter than I am."

"Some like dark people best," suggested Dan.

"I don't. I asked auntie to buy me a big cake of soap to wash the brown off, but it wouldn't come."

Dan smiled. He thought the bright, vivacious little face, with the brilliant dark eyes, pretty, though Althea did not.

"You will like to live with Dan, my dear?" said her aunt, inquiringly.

"Yes, if you come, too."

"But I can't."

"Why, not, auntie?"

"I have got to go away—on business."

Althea looked disappointed.

"I don't want you to go away, auntie," she said. "Dan and I can't live alone."

"Dan has a mother, who will be very good to you."

"Will she take care of me?" asked Althea, brightening up.

"Yes, Althea."

"Is she nice."

"Yes."

"Then she will be my mother?"

"Yes; you can call her mother."

"And you will come to see me some time, auntie?"

"Yes, my dear."

"Then I will go with Dan;" and the little girl placed her hand confidingly in that of our hero.

Dan thought it would be pleasant for him to have a little sister, and he knew that it would brighten his mother's existence.

"Shall we go now, madam?" asked Dan, turning to the lady.

"Not just yet. Come here, Dan."

Dan followed her to the window. She drew from her pocket a wallet containing a considerable sum of money.

"I will hand you two months' payment in advance," she said, "and afterward I will remit you monthly, or direct you where to call for money. Two months at fifty dollars will amount to one hundred, and twenty

more for Althea's dress will make it up to a hundred and twenty. Have you a pocket-book?"

"Yes, ma'am."

"Are you careful of money?"

"Whenever I have any to be careful about," answered Dan.

"I hope you will be comfortably provided from this time. There is a little trunk of Althea's clothes in the trunk-room below. I will write you an order for it, but you may as well wait till you have moved before carrying it away. It will save you trouble."

"Yes, ma'am,"

"Have you had any supper?"

"No, ma'am."

"Then you shall go into supper with Althea and myself."

"What! here, at the Fifth Avenue Hotel?" asked Dan.

"Certainly."

"I'm afraid I don't look fit."

"You look well enough. At any rate, it's nobody's business. We may as well go down now."

There was nothing to say, so Dan followed the mysterious lady into the supper-room, Althea clinging to his hand. He felt awkward as he took his seat. Suppose some one should recognize him as

the newsboy who usually stood in front of the Astor House!

Some one did recognize him.

The young lady whom Tom Carver was escorting boarded at the Fifth Avenue Hotel, and had alighted at the same time with our hero, though he did not observe it.

Tom had been invited to supper, and, with Julia and her father, was seated at a neighboring table when Dan entered.

Tom could hardly credit his eyes when he saw Dan entering the supper-room, with the little girl clinging to his hand.

"Well, I'll be blowed!" he ejaculated, forgetting his manners in his surprise.

"What did you remark?" asked Julia, rather amused.

"I beg your pardon, but I was so astonished. There is that newsboy coming into supper!"

"Where?"

"There."

"What a pretty little girl is with him!"

"That's so. Who can she be?"

"You must be mistaken about your friend being a newsboy."

"He is no friend of mine."

"Your acquaintance, then; though he is nice

enough looking to be a friend. Are you sure he is a newsboy?"

"Certain. I saw him selling papers yesterday in front of the Astor House."

"His business must be good, or he would not board at the Fifth Avenue Hotel."

"Of whom are you speaking, Julia?" asked her father.

"Of that boy at the next table, pa."

"That boy! Why, that's my young friend of the ferry-boat. Tom, have the kindness to ask him to come here a moment and speak to me."

Much surprised, and considerably against his will, Tom rose and walked over to where Dan was sitting.

"Look here," said he; "come over to the next table, will you?"

"What for?" asked Dan.

"There's a gentleman wants to speak to you."

Dan looked over and he recognized Mr. Rogers, of the firm of Barton & Rogers, who had asked him to call at his place of business on Pearl street.

"Good-evening, Mr. Rogers," he said, politely.

"Good-evening, my boy. Do you board here?"

"Not as a rule," answered Dan, smiling. "My business don't allow it. I am dining here with some friends."

"What's your name?"

"Daniel Mordaunt. Everybody calls me Dan."

"Then, Dan, let me make you acquainted with my daughter, Julia."

Dan bowed and smiled.

"I think you were sitting opposite me in the stage, Mr. Mordaunt," said Julia.

"Yes, Miss Rogers."

"You were polite enough to hand me my handkerchief when I awkwardly dropped it."

"Oh, don't mention it."

"I hope to meet you again."

"Thank you."

"What a pretty girl she is!" thought Dan.

"Dan, this young gentleman is Thomas Carver. You must be nearly of an age. You ought to know each other."

"I have known Mr. Carver a long time," said Dan, smiling.

"Indeed!" said Mr. Rogers, surprised.

"We used to sit together at school."

"You didn't tell me that, Tom," said Julia Rogers, turning to Tom.

"No," said Tom, embarrassed; "it is a good while ago."

"I won't detain you any longer from your friends," said Mr. Rogers, politely. "I shall see you at the office in the morning."

Dan bowed and withdrew.

"Where did you meet him, papa?" asked Julia.

Her father told the story of Dan's exploit on the ferry-boat.

"He is a very smart boy," he said. "I shall probably take him into my employ."

"I hope you will, papa. He is a very gentlemanly boy."

All this was very disagreeable to Tom Carver, but he did not venture to say all that he felt, being somewhat in awe of Mr. Rogers.

"They are making a great fuss over a common newsboy," he muttered to himself.

After supper, Dan prepared to take Althea home with him. She felt so well acquainted already that she made no objection, but, hand-in-hand, left the hotel with Dan. He halted a Broadway stage, and they got in.

"Are you carrying me to where you live, Dan?" asked the little girl.

"Yes, Althea."

"Will your mother be glad to see me?"

"Yes, she will be very glad. She wants a little girl to keep her company."

"Then I'm glad I'm going.'

CHAPTER XIV.

A NEW HOME.

Mrs. Mordaunt was apprised by Fanny that Dan had gone up town with a lady, and therefore was not alarmed when he did not return home at the usual time. She hoped he would clear fifty cents, but had no idea to what extent their fortunes would be advanced by Dan's evening's work.

"I will save Dan some supper," she said to herself. "He will be hungry."

So, mother-like, she supped economically herself, on a cup of tea and some dry bread, and bought a bit of steak for Dan's supper, for she thought he would be very hungry at so late an hour.

It was nearly half-past eight when she heard Dan's well known step on the stairs.

She opened the door to welcome him, but the cheerful welcome upon her lips died away in surprise when she saw his companion.

"Who is this, Dan?" she asked.

"She is going to be my little sister, mother," said Dan, gayly.

"Will you be my mother?" said Althea, releasing Dan's hand, and putting her own confidingly in that of Mrs. Mordaunt.

"Yes, my dear," said the widow, her heart quite won by the little girl's innocent confidence, and she bent over and kissed her.

"What does it all mean, Dan?" she asked, in bewilderment.

"It means that Althea is to board with us, and be company for you. I have agreed with her aunt that you will take her."

"But does her aunt know that we live in such a poor place?" asked his mother in a tone of hesitation.

"Yes, mother, but that makes no difference, as we shall move up town to-morrow."

"I am sure you have acted for the best, Dan, but it seems so strange."

"Will it seem strange to receive fifty dollars a month for Althea's board?" asked Dan.

"Fifty dollars a month!" repeated the widow, incredulously.

"That's the figure, mother. I didn't suppose we ought to charge more."

"More, Dan! Why, it is a fortune!"

"I don't know. That depends on Althea's appetite. Are you a great eater, Althea?"

"Sometimes I am," said the little girl, naively.

"Never mind, I guess there will be enough."

"I nearly forgot, Dan. You will want some supper. I didn't know there would be two, but I will go out and buy some more meat, if you can wait."

"I have had supper, mother, or dinner rather. I dined with Althea and her aunt at the Fifth Avenue Hotel."

Here was another surprise.

"Has Althea been stopping there, Dan?"

"Yes, mother."

"Then how can she stay even one night in this poor place?"

"I will ask her. Althea, do you mind stopping here just one night? We will go to a better place to-morrow."

"No, Dan, I don't care."

"There, mother, I told you so. Althea is a brick."

"What a funny boy you are, Dan! How can I be a brick? A brick is red and ugly, and I am not."

"No, Althea, you are not ugly, but your cheeks are red."

"They don't look like a brick, Dan."

"No, they don't. I take it all back."

"I had got your supper all ready, Dan," said his mother, regretfully.

"Then eat it yourself, mother."

"I have had my supper."

"You didn't have any meat, I'll warrant. Now, like a good mother, sit down and eat the steak."

Assured that Dan had supped well, Mrs. Mordaunt didn't resist his advice.

Dan looked on, and saw with pleasure that his mother relished the meat.

"We will be able to live better hereafter, mother," he said. "There won't be any stinting. Fifty dollars will go a good ways, and then, besides, there will be my earnings. I forgot to tell you, mother, that I have probably got a place."

"Our good fortune is coming all at once, Dan," said Mrs. Mordaunt, cheerfully.

"So it seems, mother. I think it has come to stay, too."

"I feel so tired," said Althea, at this point. "Can I go to bed?"

"Certainly, my dear child. You can go at once."

In twenty minutes the little girl was in a sound sleep. Dan was not sorry, for he wanted to tell his mother about the day's adventures, and he could do so more freely without any one to listen.

"So, mother," he concluded, "we are going to turn over a new leaf. We can't go back to our old style of living just yet, but we can get out of this tenement-house, and live in a respectable neighborhood."

"God has been good to us, Dan. We ought to feel grateful to Him."

"I know it, mother, but somehow I don't think of that as quick as you. Who do you think I saw in the supper-room at the Fifth Avenue? Who but Tom Carver. He was wonderfully puzzled to know how I happened to be there. He told the party he was with that I was a common newsboy."

"He is a very mean boy," said Mrs. Mordaunt, indignantly. "After being so intimate with you too."

"Never mind, mother. He can't do me any harm, and I don't care for his friendship. The time may come when I can meet him on even terms."

"You can now, Dan."

"I mean in a worldly way. I shall work along, and if I get rich I sha'n't be the first rich man that has risen from the ranks."

"God grant you success, my son!"

Early the next morning Dan started out in search of a new home.

He and his mother decided that they would like to live somewhere near Union Square, as that would be a pleasant afternoon resort for their young boarder.

"Will you go with me, mother?" he asked.

"No, Dan, I have not time this morning. Besides you know what will suit us."

"Very well, mother; I will do my best."

Dan crossed Broadway, and took a horse-car up town.

In West Sixteenth street his attention was drawn to the notice, "Furnished Rooms to Let," upon a good-looking brick house.

He rang the bell, and asked to see the lady of the house.

A stout, matronly looking woman, with a pleasant face, answered the servant's call.

"I called to inquire for rooms," said Dan.

"For yourself?" asked Mrs. Brown.

"For my mother, and sister, and myself."

"I have a large back room on the third floor, and a small room on the fourth floor."

"May I see them?"

"Come up stairs, sir."

First Dan went into the large room.

It was neatly carpeted and furnished, and had a cheerful outlook.

"This will do for mother and Althea," he said.

"Will you look at the little room?"

"Yes, ma'am, but I am sure that will suit. It is for me, and I am not particular But there's one thing that may trouble us."

"What is that?"

"Where can mother prepare our meals? She can't cook in the bedroom."

"I will give her the privilege of using my kitchen. I don't care to take boarders, as it would be too much care, but your mother is welcome to use my kitchen stove."

"Won't it interfere with you?"

"Leave that to your mother and myself," said Mrs. Brown, with a pleasant smile. "We can make some satisfactory arrangement."

"How much do you want for your rooms?" asked Dan.

"Will you be permanent?"

"We will be permanent, if suited."

"Of course; that is all I ask. Will four dollars a week suit you?"

"We will pay it," said Dan, quite relieved, for he feared he should have to pay more. "Can we move in to-day?"

"Any time, sir."

"Thank you."

"I generally ask a week's rent in advance," said Mrs. Brown, "but in your case I won't insist upon it."

"Oh, it is perfectly convenient," said Dan, and he drew out his pocket-book containing the money—over a hundred dollars—which Althea's aunt had given him.

Mrs. Brown's respect for Dan was considerably in-

creased by this display of wealth, and she congratulated herself on securing such substantial lodgers.

This business accomplished Dan went down town, and informed his mother of the arrangement he had made. Before night Mrs. Mordaunt, Althea, and he were installed in their new home, much to the regret of Mrs. Rafferty, who regretted losing so good a neighbor. Before this, however, Dan sought the counting-room of Barton & Rogers.

CHAPTER XV.

DAN BECOMES A DETECTIVE.

Barton & Rogers evidently did business in a large way. They occupied an imposing-looking building of five stories, the greater part being used to store goods. Dan entered and looked around him. A spare, dark-complexioned man of about thirty-five, with a pen behind his ear, was issuing orders to a couple of workmen.

Dan approached him.

"Is Mr. Rogers in?" he asked.

"No, he is not," said the dark man, curtly.

"Will he be in soon?"

"I don't know."

"You might be more civil," thought our hero.

He stood his ground, feeling authorized to do so because he had come by appointment.

Observing this, the book-keeper turned and said, sharply:

"Didn't you hear? I said Mr. Rogers was out."

"I heard you," said Dan, quietly.

"Then why do you remain? Do you doubt my word?"

"Not at all, sir; but Mr. Rogers asked me to call this morning. I can wait."

"You can tell me your business."

"Thank you, but I don't think that would do."

The book-keeper eyed him sharply, and his face lighted up with a sudden discovery.

"I know you now," he said. "You sell papers in front of the Astor House, don't you?"

"That has been my business."

"I thought so; I have bought papers of you."

"Thank you for your patronage."

"What can you want of Mr. Rogers?"

"Mr. Rogers wants me, I suppose, or he would not have asked me to call," returned Dan.

"You are a cool hand."

"Not always," said Dan, with a smile. "Some hot days I am far from cool."

"I suppose Mr. Rogers wishes you to supply him with an evening paper?"

"Perhaps he does," returned Dan, with a smile.

"Confound the fellow! I can't make anything of him. When did you see Mr. Rogers last?"

"In the supper-room of the Fifth Avenue Hotel."

"How happened you to be there?" demanded Talbot, the book-keeper, in surprise.

"I was taking supper," said Dan, rather enjoying

the other's surprise, "and Mr. Rogers saw me from another table."

"Humph! Do you often take supper at the Fifth Avenue Hotel?"

"Not often."

"Selling papers must be very profitable."

"I'm willing to change places with you."

Just then Mr. Rogers entered the warehouse.

"Ah! you are here before me, Dan," he remarked, pleasantly. "Have you been here long?"

"No, sir; only about five minutes."

"I must keep you waiting a few minutes longer while I look at my letters. The letters have arrived, have they not, Mr. Talbot?"

"Yes, sir."

"Amuse yourself as you like while you are waiting, Dan," said the merchant.

Mr. Talbot, the book-keeper, followed the merchant into the counting-room, and Dan was left alone. He looked about him with interest, thinking it probable that this was to be his future business home. It would certainly be a piece of good fortune to become attached to so large and important a house, and he felt in very good spirits, though he foresaw that Mr. Talbot would not make it very pleasant for him. But with his employer on his side he need not be alarmed.

Fifteen minutes passed, and Mr. Rogers emerged from the counting-room.

"I have to go out a few minutes," he said to Dan. "Come with me, and we can talk on the way."

"Certainly, sir."

Mr. Talbot followed the two with a frown upon his brow.

"How on earth has that boy managed to get round Mr. Rogers?" he asked himself. "I hope he won't be foolish enough to take him in here."

Talbot had a nephew whom he was anxious to get into the business, and Dan's engagement would interfere with his little plan. This partly accounts for his brusque reception of Dan on his first arrival.

"Well, how do you like our place of business, Dan?" asked Mr. Rogers.

"Very much, sir."

"Would you rather sell papers or take employment with me?"

"I should like very much to be in your employ, sir."

"How much did you earn as a newsboy?"

"When I was lucky I made a dollar a day."

"Then I ought to give you six dollars a week."

"I will come for less, sir."

"I will pay you what I said. It is more than boys

generally get at the start, but I am willing to pay a good sum to a boy who suits me."

"I will try to suit you, sir."

"Do you know why I take you into my employ?"

"Out of kindness, sir."

"I feel kindly disposed to you, Dan, but that is not my chief reason."

Dan was puzzled, and waited to hear more.

"My attention was drawn to you on the ferry-boat. I observed your detection of the mean scamp who cheated a poor flower-girl by offering her bad money, and I inferred that you were sharp and keen."

"I hope I am, sir."

"That is the sort of boy I want just now. Did you observe Mr. Talbot, my book-keeper?"

"Yes, sir."

"What did you think of him?"

Dan smiled.

"I don't think he admires me much," he answered. "He wanted to clear me out before you came in."

"Did he?"

"Yes; he recognized me as a newsboy."

"I understand his reception of you. He has a nephew whom he wishes me to engage. He is jealous of all possible rivals."

"Perhaps his nephew would suit you better, sir," said Dan, modestly.

"Are you willing to resign in his favor?"

"I prefer to leave that to you, sir."

"You can do so safely. The nephew is a disagreeable boy, who would not suit me at all. He thinks more of dress than of duty, and, if I read him aright, is lazy and incompetent. Nevertheless, Mr. Talbot has spoken to me about taking him."

"Perhaps he doesn't know his nephew's faults."

"He knows them well enough, but is desirous of promoting his interests. He won't look upon you very favorably when he learns that I have engaged you."

"If you are satisfied, I won't care for that."

"Well spoken, my lad. And now for a few words in confidence," and Mr. Rogers lowered his voice. "Our business is a large one, and the sums of money handled are necessarily large. Three months since I ascertained that somewhere in my establishment there was a leak. We are losing money in some unexplained way. I believe that some one in whom I repose confidence is betraying me."

Dan listened in earnest attention.

"Do you suspect any one, sir?" he asked.

"I suspect Mr. Talbot," he said, in the same low voice.

Dan started in surprise.

"It seems strange, perhaps, that I should speak so

confidentially to you—a mere boy—but I am impressed with the idea that you can help me."

"If I can, sir, I will," said Dan, earnestly.

"I don't doubt it. My first injunction is to say no word, even to your nearest relations, of what I have told you."

"I won't, sir."

"Next, keep a watch over Mr. Talbot. I want to know what are his habits, whether he uses money freely, with whom he associates. Can you, without betraying to him that he is watched, find out some information for me on these points?"

"I will try, sir."

"If you secure any information, never communicate it to me in the office. Either come to my house, or write me there."

"Yes, sir."

"You understand that I am employing you in a detective capacity, and that your time will partly be taken up out of business hours. I intend to pay you extra, according to results. Is that satisfactory?"

"Perfectly so, Mr. Rogers, but I am afraid you will be disappointed in me."

"I will take my risk of that."

"Have you any directions to give me, sir, as to how to go to work?"

"No; I am nothing of a detective myself. I leave

that to you. I might, of course, employ a professional detective, but Talbot is sharp, and he would suspect. You he will not suspect. He won't dream of my employing a boy. That is all I have to say for the present. When can you come to work?"

"I can come to-morrow morning. To-day we are going to move."

"To-morrow let it be, then. Good-morning, Dan."

Mr. Rogers shook hands with our hero, and walked away.

"I am afraid I have a hard job on my hands," thought Dan, "but I will do my best."

CHAPTER XVI.

DAN MAKES A DISCOVERY.

Dan's mother was much pleased with her new quarters. The large room, occupied by Althea and herself, was bright and cheerful, and well furnished. Besides the ordinary chamber furniture, there was a comfortable arm-chair and a lounge. Mrs. Mordaunt felt that she would not be ashamed now to receive a visit from some of her former friends.

She had anticipated some trouble about the preparation of meals, but Mrs. Brown made a proposition which wonderfully removed all difficulties.

"Mrs. Mordaunt," she said, "your family is about the same as mine. I have a son who is employed in a newspaper office down town, and you have two young children. Now, suppose we club together, and each pay half of the table supplies. Then one day you can superintend the cooking—you will only have to direct my servant Maggie—and the next day I will do it. Then, every other day, each of us will be a lady of leisure, and not have to go into the kitchen at all. What do you say?"

"The arrangement will be so much to my advantage that I can say only one thing—I accept with thanks. But won't you be doing more than your share? You will be furnishing the fuel, and pay Maggie's wages."

"I should have to do that at any rate. The plan is perfectly satisfactory to me, if it suits you."

Mrs. Mordaunt found that the expense was not beyond her means. Her income for the care of Althea was fifty dollars a month, and Dan paid her four dollars a week out of his wages, reserving the balance as a fund to purchase clothes. She went herself to market and selected articles for the table, and, for the first time since her husband's failure, found herself in easy circumstances.

There was no need now to make vests at starvation prices. She had thought of continuing, but Dan insisted upon her giving it up entirely.

"If you want to sew, mother," he said, "you can make some of Althea's clothes, and pay yourself out of the ten dollars a month allowed for her clothes."

This was sensible and proper, and Mrs. Mordaunt decided to follow Dan's advice. She lost no time in obtaining books for the little girl, and commencing her education. Althea knew her letters, but nothing more. She was bright and eager to learn, and gained rapidly under her new teacher.

Naturally, Dan and his mother were curious as to Althea's early history, but from the little girl they obtained little information.

"Do you remember your mother, Althea?" asked Dan, one evening.

"Yes," said the little girl.

"When did you see her last?"

"Not long ago. Only a little while before you brought me here."

"Your mother isn't dead, is she?"

"No; but she's gone away."

"Why did she go away?"

"She is sick. That's what auntie told me. Poor mamma cried very much when she went away. She kissed me, and called me her darling."

"Do you know where she went?"

"No; I don't know."

"Perhaps her lungs are affected, and she has gone to a warmer climate," suggested Mrs. Mordaunt. "She may have gone to Florida, or even to Italy."

"Where is your father?" asked Dan, turning to Althea.

"Father is a bad man," said the child, positively. "He made mamma cry. He went away a good while ago."

"And didn't he come back?"

"He came back once, and then mamma cried

again. I think he wanted mamma to give him some money."

Dan and his mother talked over the little girl's revelations, and thought they had obtained a clew to the mystery in which the child's history was involved. Althea's mother might have married a man of bad habits, who wanted to get possession of her fortune, and rendered a separation necessary. Ill health might have required her to leave home and shift the care of the little girl upon strangers. It seemed rather odd that she should have been handed over to utter strangers, but there might have been reasons of which they knew nothing.

"We won't trouble ourselves about it," said Dan. "It's good luck for us, even if it was bad luck for Althea's mother. I like the idea of having a little sister."

Althea's last name was not known to her new protector. When Dan inquired, he was told that she could pass by his name, so Althea Mordaunt she became.

Both Dan and his mother had feared that she might become homesick, but the fear seemed groundless. She was of a happy disposition, and almost immediately began to call Mrs. Mordaunt mother.

"I call you mother," she said, "but I have a mamma besides; but she has gone away."

"You must not forget your mamma, my dear," said the widow.

"No, I won't. She will come back some day; she said she would."

"And I will take care of you till she does, Althea."

"Yes," said the child, nodding. "I am glad I came to you, for now I have a brother Dan."

"And I have a little sister," said Dan.

While Dan was away, and now he was away after supper regularly, Althea was a great deal of company for Mrs. Mordaunt.

In the pleasant afternoons she took the little girl out to walk, frequently to Union Square Park, where she made acquaintance with other little girls, and had a merry time, while her new mother sat on one of the benches.

One day a dark-complexioned gentleman, who had been looking earnestly at Althea, addressed Mrs. Mordaunt.

"That is a fine little girl of yours, madam," he said.

"Thank you," said Mrs. Mordaunt.

"She does not resemble you much," he said, inquiringly.

"No; there is very little resemblance," answered Mrs. Mordaunt, quietly, feeling that she must be on her guard.

"Probably she resembles her father?" again essayed the stranger.

Mrs. Mordaunt did not reply, and the stranger thought she was offended.

"I beg your pardon," he said, "but she resembles a friend of mine, and that called my attention to her."

Mrs. Mordaunt bowed, but thought it wisest not to protract the conversation. She feared that the inquirer might be a friend of the father, and hostile to the true interests of the child.

For a week to come she did not again bring Althea to the park, but walked with her in a different direction. When, after a week, she returned to the square, the stranger had disappeared. At all events, he was not to be seen.

We pass now to Dan and his interests.

Mr. Talbot heard of his engagement with anything but satisfaction. He even ventured to remonstrate with Mr. Rogers.

"Do you know that this boy whom you have engaged is a common newsboy?" he asked. "I have bought a paper more than once of him, in front of the Astor House."

"So have I," answered Mr. Rogers, quietly.

"Then you know all about him?"

"Yes."

"It is none of my business, but I think you could easily get a better boy. There is my nephew——"

"Your nephew would not suit me, Mr. Talbot."

The book-keeper bit his lip.

"Won't you give him a trial?" he asked.

"I have engaged Dan."

"If Dan should prove unsatisfactory, would you try my nephew?"

"Perhaps so."

It was an incautious concession, for it was an inducement to the book-keeper to get Dan into trouble.

It was Dan's duty to go to the post-office, sometimes to go on errands, and to make himself generally useful about the warehouses. As we know, however, he had other duties of a more important character, of which Mr. Talbot knew nothing.

The first discovery Dan made was made through the book-keeper's carelessness.

Mr. Rogers was absent in Philadelphia, when Talbot received a note which evidently disturbed him. Dan saw him knitting his brows, and looking moody. Finally he hastily wrote a note, and called Dan.

"Take that to — Wall street," he said, "and don't loiter on the way."

The note was directed to Jones & Robinson.

On reaching the address, Dan found that Jones & Robinson were stock brokers.

Jones read the note.

"You come from Mr. Talbot?" he asked.

"Yes, sir."

"Tell him we will carry the stocks for him a week longer, but can't exceed that time."

"Perhaps you had better write him a note," suggested Dan, "as he may not like to have me know his business."

"Very well."

So Dan carried back the note.

"I believe I have made a discovery," he said to himself. "Mr. Talbot is speculating in Wall street. I wonder if he speculates with his own money or the firm's?"

His face, however, betrayed nothing as he handed the note to the book-keeper, and the latter, after a searching glance, decided that there was nothing to fear in that quarter.

CHAPTER XVII.

TALBOT'S SECRET.

Some light may be thrown upon Mr. Talbot's operations, if the reader will accompany him to a brown-stone house on Lexington avenue, on the evening of the day when Dan was sent to the office of the Wall street brokers.

Mr. Talbot ascended the steps, not with the elastic step of a man with whom the world is prospering, but with the slow step of a man who is burdened with care.

"Is Miss Conway at home?" he inquired of the servant who answered the bell.

"Yes, sir."

"Will you tell her I should like to speak with her?"

"Yes, sir."

Talbot walked in with the air of one who was familiar with the house, and entering a small front room, took a seat.

The furniture was plain, and the general appearance was that of a boarding-house.

Talbot seemed immersed in thought, and only

raised his eyes from the carpet when he heard the entrance of a young lady. His face lighted up, and he rose eagerly.

"My dear Virginia," he said, "it seems a long time since I saw you."

"It is only four days," returned the young lady, coolly.

"Four days without seeing you is an eternity."

The young lady smiled. It was easy to see that Talbot was in love, and she was not.

"A very pretty compliment," she said. "Well, have you any news?"

"Not good news," said he, soberly.

She shrugged her shoulders, and looked disappointed.

Before going further, it may be as well to describe briefly the young lady who had so enthralled the book-keeper.

She had the advantage of youth, a complexion clear red and white, and decidedly pretty features. If there was a defect, it was the expression of her eyes. There was nothing soft or winning in her glance. She seemed, and was, of a cold, calculating, unsympathetic nature. She was intensely selfish, and was resolved only to marry a man who could gratify her taste for finery and luxurious living.

She was the niece of Mrs. Sinclair, who kept the

boarding-house, and though living in dependence upon her aunt, did nothing to relieve her from the care and drudgery incidental to her business.

"It's too provoking," she said, pouting.

"So it is, Virginia;" and Talbot tried to take her hand, but she quietly withdrew it.

"You told me that you would have plenty of money by this time, Mr. Talbot."

"I expected it, but a man can't foresee the fluctuations of Wall street. I am afraid I shall meet with a loss."

"I don't believe you are as smart as Sam Eustis—he's engaged to my cousin. He made ten thousand dollars last month on Lake Shore."

"It's the fools that blunder into luck," said Talbot, irritated.

"Then you'd better turn fool; it seems to pay," said Virginia, rather sharply.

"No need of that—I'm fool enough already," said Talbot, bitterly.

"Oh, well, if you've only come here to make yourself disagreeable, I'm sure you'd better stay away," said the young lady, tossing her head.

"I came here expecting sympathy and encouragement," said Talbot. "Instead, you receive me with taunts and coldness."

"You are unreasonable, Mr. Talbot," said Vir-

ginia. "I will be cheerful and pleasant when you bring me agreeable news."

"Oh, Virginia!" exclaimed Talbot, impulsively. "Why will you require impossibilities of me? Take me as I am. I have an income of two thousand dollars a year. We can live comfortably on that, and be happy in a snug little home."

"Snug little home!" repeated the young lady, scornfully. "Thank you; I'd rather not. I know just what that means. It means that I am to be a household drudge, afraid to spend an extra sixpence —perhaps obliged to take lodgers, like my aunt."

"Not so bad as that, Virginia."

"It would come to that in time."

"I am sure you cannot love me when you so coolly give me up for money."

"I haven't given you up, but I want you to get money."

"Would to Heaven I could!"

"You could if you were in earnest."

"Do you doubt that?"

"Where there's a will, there's a way, Mr. Talbot. If you really care so much for me, you will try to support me as I want to live."

"Tell me, in a word, what you want."

"Well," said Virginia, slowly, "I want to go to Europe for my honey-moon. I've heard so much of

Paris, I know I should like it ever so much. Then I want to live *respectably* when I get back."

"What do you call living respectably?" asked Talbot.

"Well, we must have a nice little house to ourselves, and I think, just at first, I could get along with three servants; and I should want to go to the opera, and the theater, and to concerts."

"You have not been accustomed to live in that way, Virginia."

"No; and that's why I have made up my mind not to marry unless my husband can gratify me."

"Suppose this is impossible?"

"Impossible for you!" said Miss Conway, significantly.

"You mean you will look elsewhere?" said Talbot, hastily.

"Yes, I think so," said Virginia, coolly.

"And you would desert me for a richer suitor?" he demanded, quickly.

"Of course I would rather marry you—you know that," said Virginia, with perfect self-possession; "but if you can't meet my conditions, perhaps it is better that we should part."

"You are cruel—heartless!" exclaimed Talbot, angrily.

"No; only sensible," she returned, calmly. "I

don't mean to marry you and be unhappy all my life; and I can't be happy living in the stuffy way my aunt does. We should both be sorry for such a marriage when it was too late."

"I will take the risk, Virginia," said Talbot, fixing his eyes with passionate love on the cold-hearted girl.

"But I will not," said Virginia, decidedly. "I am sure you needn't take it to heart, Mr. Talbot Why don't you exert yourself and win a fortune, as other people do? I am sure plenty of money is made in Wall street."

"And lost."

"Not if you are smart. Come now, smooth your face, and tell me you will try," she said, coaxingly.

"Yes, Virginia, I will try," he answered, his face clearing. "And if I try——"

"You will succeed," she said, smiling.

"Well, I hope I may."

"And now don't let us talk about disagreeable things. Do you know, sir, it is a week since you took me to any place of amusement? And here I have been moping at home every evening with my aunt, who is terribly tireseme, poor old soul!"

"I would rather spend the evening here with you, Virginia, than go to any place of amusement."

"Then I can't agree with you. One gets tired of spooning."

"I don't—if you call by that name being in the company of one you love."

"You would, if you had as little variety as I have."

"Tell me one thing, Virginia—you love me, don't you?" asked Talbot, in whose mind sometimes there rose an unpleasant suspicion that his love was not returned.

"Why, of course I do, you foolish man," she said carelessly. "And now, where are you going to take me?"

"Where do you want to go, my darling?"

"To the Italian opera. To-morrow they play 'The Huguenots.'"

"I thought you didn't care for music, Virginia?"

"I don't go for that. I want to go because it's fashionable, and I want to be seen. So, be a good boy, and get some nice seats for to-morrow evening."

"Very well, my darling."

"And you'll try to get rich, for my sake?"

"Yes, Virginia. How rich must I be?"

"As soon as you can tell me you have ten thousand dollars, and will spend half of it on a trip to Europe, I will marry you."

"Is that a bargain?"

"Yes."

"Then I hope to tell you so soon."

"The sooner the better."

When Talbot left the house it was with the determination to secure the sum required by any means, however objectionable. His great love had made him reckless.

Virginia Conway followed his retreating form with her cool, calculating glance.

"Poor man! he is awfully in love!" she said to herself. "I'll give him two months to raise the money, and if he fails, I think I can captivate Mr. Cross, though he's horrid."

Mr. Cross was a middle-aged grocer, a widower, without children, and reputed moderately wealthy.

When Mr. Talbot had entered the house, Dan was not far off. Later, he saw him at the window with Virginia.

"I suppose that's his young lady," thought Dan. "All right! I guess he's safe for this evening."

CHAPTER XVIII.

TWO KNIGHTS OF THE HIGHWAY.

Stocks took an upward turn, so that Talbot's brokers were willing to carry them for him longer without an increase of margin. The market looked so uncertain, however, that he decided to sell, though he only made himself whole. To escape loss hardly satisfied him, when it was so essential to make money.

He was deeply in love with Virginia Conway, but there was no hope of obtaining her consent to a marriage unless he could raise money enough to gratify her desires.

How should he do it?

He was returning to his boarding-house at a late hour one night, when, in an unfrequented street, two figures advanced upon him from the darkness, and, while one seized him by the throat, the other rifled his pockets.

Talbot was not a coward, and having only a few dollars in his pocket-book, while his watch, luckily, was under repair at Tiffany's, he submitted quietly to the examination.

The pocket-book was opened and its contents eagerly scanned.

An exclamation of disgust mingled with profanity followed.

"Only five dollars, Mike!" muttered one of the ruffians.

"Why don't you carry money, like a gentleman?" demanded the man called Mike. "Ain't you ashamed to carry such a lean wallet as that there?"

"Really, gentlemen, if I had expected to meet you, I would have provided myself better," said Talbot, not without a gleam of humor.

"He's chaffing us, Bill," said Mike.

"You'd better not, if you know what's best for yourself," growled Bill. "Where's your ticker?"

"My watch is at Tiffany's."

"That's too thin."

"It's the truth. You ought to have waited till next week, when I'd have had it for you."

"You're a cool customer."

"Why not?"

"We might hurt you."

"You have already. Don't squeeze my throat so next time."

"Have you any jewelry about you?"

"Only a pair of sleeve buttons."

"Gold?"

"Yes; but they are small, and not worth much."

"You've took us in reg'lar! A gent like you ought to have diamond studs, or a pin, or something of value."

"I know it, and I'm sorry I haven't, for your sakes."

"No chaffing!" said Bill, with an ominous growl.

"Don't be afraid. I look upon you as gentlemen, and treat you accordingly. In fact, I'm glad I've met with you."

"Why?" asked Mike, suspiciously.

"I may be able to put something in your way."

"Are you on the square?" asked Bill, rather surprised.

"Yes."

"What is it?"

"I can't tell you in the street. Is there any quiet place, where we shall not be disturbed or overheard?"

The men looked at each other in doubt.

"This may be a plant," said Mike, suspiciously.

"On my honor, it isn't."

"If it is," growled Bill, "you'd better make your will."

"I know the risk, and am not afraid. In short, I have a job for you."

The men consulted, and finally were led to put confidence in Talbot.

"Is there money in it?" asked Mike.

"Two hundred dollars apiece."

"We'll hear what you have to say. Bill, let's go to your room."

"Is it far away?" asked Talbot.

"No."

"Lead on, then."

The three made their way to a dilapidated building on Houston street, and ascended to the fourth floor.

Bill kicked open the door of a room with his foot and strode in.

A thin, wretched-looking woman sat in a wooden chair, holding a young child.

"Is it you, Bill?" she asked.

"Yes, it's me!" growled her husband. "Just clear out into the other room. Me and these gentlemen have business together."

She meekly obeyed the command of her lord, glancing curiously at Talbot as she went out. Mike she knew only too well, as one of her husband's evil companions.

The door was closed, but the wife bent her ear to the keyhole and listened attentively.

Suspecting nothing, the conspirators spoke in louder

tones than they were aware of, so that she obtained a pretty clear idea of what was being planned.

"Now go ahead," said Bill, throwing himself on the chair his wife had vacated. "What's your game?"

"Can you open a safe?" asked Talbot.

"We might, 'specially if we knowed the combination."

"Perhaps I can manage that."

"Where is it?"

Talbot gave the name of his employer and the number of his store.

"What have you got to do with it?"

"I'm the book-keeper."

"You are? What are you going to make out of it?"

"Leave that to me. I'll guarantee that you'll find four hundred dollars there to pay you for your trouble."

"That isn't enough. The risk is too great."

"It is only one night's work."

"If we're caught, it'll be Sing Sing for seven years."

"That's true. How much do you require, gentlemen?"

The men consulted.

"We might do it for five hundred apiece," said Bill.

There was a little discussion, but finally this was acceded to. Various details were discussed, and the men separated.

"I'm goin' your way," said Mike. "I'll show you the way out."

"All right, thank you, but we'd better separate at the street door."

"Why? Are you too fine a gentleman to be seen with the likes of me?" demanded Mike, feeling insulted.

"Not at all, my friend; but if we were seen together by any of the police, who know me as bookkeeper, it would excite suspicion later."

"You're right. Your head's level. You're sure you're on the square?"

"Yes, my friend. I shouldn't dare to tamper with men like you and Bill. You might find a way to get even with me."

"That's so, stranger. I guess we can trust you."

"You may be sure of that."

"More crime!" said the miserable wife to herself, as she heard through the keyhole the details of the plan. "Bill is getting worse and worse every day. Where will it all end?"

"Here, Nancy, get me something to eat," said Bill, when his visitors had departed.

"Yes, Bill, I will get you all there is."

The wife brought out from a small closet a slice of bread and a segment of cheese."

"Pah!" said the burly ruffian, turning up his nose. "What are you giving us?"

"It's all I've got, Bill."

"Where's the meat, I say?"

"There is none."

"You and your brat have eaten it!" said he, irritably.

"God help us, Bill! We have had no meat for a week."

"That's a lie! I can't eat such trash as that. Do you mean to starve me?"

"I can't make food, Bill. If you will give money, I will provide better. I can't do anything without money."

"Whining, are you?" said the brute, furiously. "I'll teach you to complain of me. Take that, and that!" and he struck the woman two brutal blows with his fist. One, glancing, struck the child, who began to cry. This further irritated Bill, who, seizing his wife by the shoulders, thrust her out on the landing.

"There, stay there with the cursed brat!" he growled. "I mean to have one quiet night."

The wretched wife crept down stairs, and out into the street, scarcely knowing what she did. She was

not wholly destitute of spirit, and though she might have forgiven personal injury, felt incensed by the treatment of her innocent child.

"My poor baby!" she said, pitifully, "must you suffer because your father is a brute? May Heaven avenge our wrongs! Sooner or later it will."

She sat down on some steps near by; the air was chilly, and she shivered with the cold, but she tried to shelter her babe as well as she could. She attracted the attention of a boy who was walking slowly by.

It was Dan, who had at a distance witnessed Talbot's encounter with the burglars, and his subsequent friendly companionship with them, and was trying to ascertain the character of the place which he visited.

"What's the matter with you?" asked Dan, in a tone of sympathy.

"My husband has thrust me out of doors with my poor baby."

"He must be a nice husband. Do you want a lodging?"

"I have no money."

"I can let you have enough for that. There's a cheap hotel near by. I'll take you to it, and pay for your lodging, and pay for it in advance."

"Heaven bless you! You are indeed a friend."

"What's the matter with you?" asked Dan, in a tone of sympathy.
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"Take my arm."

Supported by Dan, the poor woman rose and walked to an humble tavern not far away.

"She may know something about Talbot's visit. I'll question her," thought Dan.

CHAPTER XIX.

DAN AS A GOOD SAMARITAN.

"What made your husband treat you so badly?" asked Dan.

"Rum!" answered the woman. "Rum has been sinking him lower and lower, and it's easy to see the end."

"What will be the end?"

"The prison—perhaps the gallows."

"You are taking too dark a view of your husband," said Dan, soothingly. "He won't go as far as that."

The woman shook her head.

"I know him only too well," she said. "This very evening he has been planning a burglary."

Dan started, and a sudden suspicion entered his mind.

"Did you hear him doing it?" he asked.

"Yes."

"Do you know where it is?" he asked, eagerly.

"Yes; it is a store on Pearl street."

Dan felt that he was on the track of a discovery.

He was likely to be repaid at last for the hours he had spent in detective service.

"Who put him up to it?" he asked, fixing his eyes intently on the woman.

"I don't know his name; he is a well-dressed man. I think he is in the store."

"Was it a man who came to your rooms this evening?"

"Yes."

"Is this the way he looked?" Here Dan gave a rapid description of Talbot.

"That is the man. Do you know him?"

"Yes, I know him. He is the book-keeper of the firm."

"He is a bad man. He is to pay a thousand dollars for the job. Bill is to have half of it."

"Bill, I suppose, is your husband?"

"Yes."

Dan looked thoughtful. Here was a most important discovery. He must consider what to do.

By this time they had reached a small public-house, of humble exterior, but likely to afford his companion better accommodations than she had at home.

"Come in," said Dan.

The woman followed him, with the child in her arms. A stout German, who appeared to be the proprietor of the establishment, was sitting in an

arm-chair, smoking a pipe. He scanned the party phlegmatically.

"What you wants?" he asked.

"Can you give this lady a room?" asked Dan.

"Is she your vife?" asked the German, with a broad grin.

"No; she is an acquaintance of mine. Her husband has driven her out of his house in a fit of drunkenness. Can she sleep here?"

"Has she got any money?" asked the Dutchman, shrewdly.

"I will pay for her lodging."

"That's all right. She shall stay here."

"What will you charge?"

"Fifty cents a night for the lodging."

"Here it is."

"Will the lady go up now?" asked the landlord, upon whom the silver half-dollar produced a visible impression.

"Yes," said the woman; "my poor baby is tired."

"You had better stay here two nights," said Dan. "Don't let your husband know where you are just yet. Here is money to pay for another night's lodging, and enough to buy food besides."

"God bless you, boy!" she said, gratefully. "But for you I should have had to stay out all night."

"Oh, no; some one would have taken you in."

"You don't know this neighborhood; the policeman would have found me, and taken me to the station-house. For myself I care little; but my poor babe, who is worse than fatherless——" and she burst into tears.

"Keep up your courage, madam. Brighter days may be in store," said Dan, cheerfully.

"I will come and see you day after to-morrow," said Dan. "Good-night."

Our hero must not be awarded too great credit for his generosity. He knew that Mr. Rogers would willingly defray all expenses connected with the discovery, and that the money he had advanced to his unfortunate companion would be repaid. Had it been otherwise, however, his generous heart would have prompted him to relieve the woman's suffering.

CHAPTER XX.

LAYING THE TRAIN.

Very early the next morning Dan rang the bell at Mr. Rogers' residence.

"Can I see Mr. Rogers?" he asked.

"The master won't be up for an hour," said the servant.

"Tell him Dan wishes to see him on business of importance."

The girl shrugged her shoulders.

"I don't think he'll see you. He was up late last night," she said.

"Never mind. Let him know I am here."

"It's very important you make yourself," said Susan, crossly.

"I *am* a person of great importance," said Dan, smiling. "Mr. Rogers will see me, you'll find."

Two minutes later Susan descended the stairs a little bewildered.

"You're to walk into the parlor," she said. "Master'll be down directly."

Dan did not have long to wait. Mr. Rogers came

down stairs almost directly in dressing-gown and slippers.

"Well, Dan, what is it?" he asked.

"The store is to be broken open to-night and the safe robbed!" said Dan.

"Good heavens! By whom?"

"By two men living in Houston street—at least, one lives there."

"Have you any more to tell?"

"Yes, sir; they are employed by Mr. Talbot."

Mr. Rogers started.

"Are you sure of this?" he asked.

"Quite sure."

"How did you find out?"

"Partly by accident, sir."

"Go on. Tell me all."

Dan rehearsed the story, already familiar to our readers, combining with it some further information he had drawn from the woman.

"I didn't think Talbot capable of this," said Mr. Rogers. "He has been in our employ for ten years. I don't like to think of his treachery, but, unhappily, there is no reason to doubt it. Now, Dan, what is your advice?"

"I am afraid my advice wouldn't be worth much, Mr. Rogers," said Dan, modestly.

"I am not sure of that. I am indebted to you for

this important discovery. You are keen and ready-witted. I won't promise to follow your advice, but I should like to hear it."

"Then, sir, I will ask you a question. Do you want to prevent the robbery, or to catch the men in the act?"

"I wish to catch the burglars in the act."

"Then, sir, can you stay away from the store to-day?"

"Why?"

"Your looks might betray your suspicions."

"There is something in that. But how can I take measures to guard against loss?"

"You can act through me, sir. Is there much money in the safe?"

"No; but Talbot is authorized to sign checks. He will draw money if I am not at the store."

"Will he place it in the safe?"

"Probably"

"Then let him do so. He is to tell the burglars the combination. He will get it from the janitor."

"The scoundrel!"

"I will see the janitor, and ask him to give the book-keeper the wrong word."

"What else?"

"I will secretly notify the police, whom he will admit and hide till the time comes."

"That is well planned."

"Then," continued Dan, flushing with excitement, "we'll wait till the burglars come, and let them begin work on the safe. While they are at work, we will nab them."

"You say we."

"Yes, sir; I want to be there."

"There may be danger."

"I'll risk it, sir."

"Dan, you are a brave boy."

"I don't know about that, sir. But if anything is going on to-night, I want to be in it."

"You shall, but be prudent. I don't want you to be hurt."

"Thank you, sir. If Mr. Talbot sends me with a large check to the bank, what shall I do?"

"Take it."

"He may make off with the money during the day."

"I will set another detective to watch him, and have him arrested in that event."

"This is going to be an exciting day," said Dan to himself, as he set out for the store.

CHAPTER XXI.

TWELVE THOUSAND DOLLARS.

As Dan entered the store he noticed that Talbot looked excited and nervous. Ordinarily the book-keeper would have reprimanded him sharply for his late arrival, but he was not disposed to be strict this morning.

"I'm a little late this morning, Mr. Talbot," said Dan.

"Oh, well, you can be excused for once," said Talbot.

He wished to disarm suspicion by extra good humor. Besides, he intended to send Dan to the bank presently for a heavy sum, and thought it best to be on friendly terms with him.

About ten o'clock a messenger entered the store with a note from Mr. Rogers to the book-keeper. It was to this effect:

"I am feeling rather out of sorts this morning, and shall not come to the store. Should you desire to consult me on any subject, send a messenger to my house."

Talbot read this note with great satisfaction. The

only obstacle to carrying out his plans was the apprehended presence and vigilance of his employer. Now he had a clear field.

About one o'clock he called Dan into the office.

"Here, Dan," he said, "I want you to go to the bank at once."

"Yes, sir."

"Here is a check for twelve thousand dollars—rather a heavy amount—and you must be very careful not to lose any of it, or to let any one see that you have so much with you. Do you understand?"

"Yes, sir. In what denominations shall I get the money?"

"You may get one hundred dollars in fives and tens, and the remainder in large bills."

"All right, sir."

"He means to make a big haul," said Dan to himself, as he left the store. "I hope our plans won't miscarry. I wouldn't like Mr. Rogers to lose so large a sum."

As Dan left the store a man of middle size, who was lounging against a lamp-post, eyed him sharply. As Dan was turning the corner of the street he left his post, and, walking rapidly, overtook him.

"Where are you going?" he asked.

"What is that to you?" demanded Dan.

"You are in the employ of Barton & Rogers, are you not?"

"Yes, sir."

"Is your name Dan?"

"Yes, sir."

"I am a detective, on watch here by order of Mr. Rogers. Now will you answer my question?"

"Certainly. I am going to the bank."

"To draw money?"

"Yes, sir."

"How much?"

"Twelve thousand dollars."

"Whew! That is a big sum. Who sent you?"

"Mr. Talbot."

"He is the book-keeper, is he not?"

"Yes, sir."

"I will walk along with you. There is no need of watching till you bring back the money. Where do you think Talbot will put the money?"

"In the safe, I think, sir."

"I am not sure of that. I believe he will retain the greater part on his own person. If the men who are to rob the safe got hold of all the money they would be likely to keep it, and not limit themselves to the sum he agrees to pay them."

"I suppose you are right, sir. What, then, are we to do?" asked Dan, perplexed.

"I shall take care to keep Talbot in view. He doesn't propose to run away. He means to have it understood that all this money has been taken by the burglars, whereas but a tithe of the sum will be deposited in the safe."

Dan nodded assent. He was convinced that the detective was right. Still he was anxious.

"It seems to me there is a risk of losing the money," he said.

The detective smiled.

"Don't be afraid," he said, confidentially. "Talbot won't leave the city. I will take care of that."

His words inspired confidence, and Dan entered the bank without misgivings.

The check was so large that the bank officials scrutinized it carefully. There was no doubt about its being correct, however.

"How will you have it?" was asked.

Dan answered as he had been directed.

"Be very careful, young man," said the disbursing clerk. "You've got too much to lose."

"All right, sir."

Dan deposited one roll of bills in the left inside pocket of his coat, and the balance in the right pocket, and then buttoned up the coat.

"I'm a boy of fortune for a short time," he said to

himself. "I hope the time will come when I shall have as much money of my own."

Dan observed that the detective followed him at a little distance, and it gave him a feeling of security. Some one might have seen the large sum of money paid him, and instances had been known where boys in such circumstances had suddenly been set upon in the open street at midday and robbed. He felt that he had a friend near at hand who would interfere in such a case.

"What time is it, boy?" asked an ill-looking man, suddenly accosting him.

"Half-past one."

"Look at your watch."

"I don't carry one," said Dan, eying the questioner suspiciously.

"Nor I. I have been very unfortunate. Can't you give me a quarter to buy me some dinner?"

"Ask some one else; I'm in a hurry," said Dan, coldly.

The man went away muttering.

"I'm not as green as you take me for," said Dan to himself.

He thought his danger was over, but he was mistaken.

Suddenly a large man, with red hair and beard,

emerging from Dan knew not where, laid his hand on his shoulder.

Dan turned in surprise.

"Boy," said he, in a fierce undertone, "give me that money you have in your coat-pocket, or I will brain you."

"You forget we are in the public street," said Dan.

"No, I don't."

"You would be arrested."

"And you would be—stunned, perhaps killed!" hissed the man. "Look here, boy, I am a desperate man. I know how much money you have with you. Give me half, and go."

Dan looked out of the corner of his eye, to see the detective close at hand. This gave him courage, for he recognized that the villain was only speaking the truth, and he did not wish to run any unnecessary risk. He gave a nod, which brought the detective nearer, and then slipped to one side, calling:

"Stop thief!"

The ruffian made a dash for him, his face distorted with rage, but his arm was grasped as by an iron vise.

"Not so fast, Jack Benton!" exclaimed the detective, and he signaled to a policeman. "You are up to your old tricks again, as I expected."

"Who are you?" demanded Jack, angrily.

"A detective"

"The devil!" ejaculated the foiled burglar. "I have taken nothing," he added, sullenly.

"That isn't your fault. I heard you threatening the boy, unless he gave up the money in his possession. Take him away, officer. I will appear against him."

"Thank you, sir," said Dan, gratefully.

"All right. Go on as quickly as possible. I will keep you in view."

All this took a little time.

Talbot, whose conscience was uneasy, and with good cause, awaited Dan's arrival very anxiously.

"What made you so long?" he asked.

"A man tried to rob me."

"Did he succeed?" asked Talbot, quickly.

"No; he was recognized by a policeman, who arrested him as he was on the point of attacking me."

Talbot asked no further questions, considerably to Dan's relief, for he did not wish to mention the detective if it could be avoided.

The book-keeper contented himself with saying, in a preoccupied tone, as he received the money:

"You can't be too careful when you have much money about you. I am almost sorry I sent for this money," he proceeded. "I don't think I shall need to use it to-day."

"Shall I take it back to the bank, sir?" asked Dan.

"No; I shall put it in the safe over night. I don't care to risk you or the money again to-day."

"That's a blind," thought Dan. "He won't put it in the safe."

CHAPTER XXII.

TALBOT'S SCHEME FAILS.

Talbot went into the office where he was alone. But the partition walls were of glass, and Dan managed to put himself in a position where he could see all that passed within.

The book-keeper opened the package of bills, and divided them into two parcels. One he replaced in the original paper and labeled it "$12,000."

The other he put into another paper, and put into his own pocket. Dan saw it all, but could not distinguish the denominations of the bills assigned to the different packages He had no doubt, however, that the smaller bills were placed in the package intended to be deposited in the safe, so that, though of apparently equal value, it really contained only about one-tenth of the money drawn from the bank.

Talbot was not conscious of observation. Indeed, he was not observed, except by Dan, whose business it was to watch him.

The division being made, he opened the safe and placed the package therein.

"Not quite smart enough, Mr. Talbot," thought Dan. "You will need more watching."

He was anxious to communicate his discovery to the detective outside, but for some time had no opportunity.

About an hour later he was sent out on an errand. He looked about him in a guarded manner till he attracted the attention of the outside detective. The latter, in answer to a slight nod, approached him carelessly.

"Well," he asked, "have you any news?"

"Yes," answered Dan. "Mr. Talbot has divided the money into two packages, and one of them he has put into his own pocket."

"What has he done with the other?"

"Put it into the safe."

"As I expected. He means to appropriate the greater part to his own use."

"Is there anything more for me to do?" asked Dan.

"I don't know. Keep your eyes open. Does the book-keeper suspect that he is watched?"

"I am sure that he doesn't."

"That is well."

"I am afraid he will get away with the money," said Dan, anxiously.

"I am not. Do you know whether there's any woman in the case?"

"He visits a young lady on Lexington avenue."

"Do you know the number?"

"No."

"That is important. It is probably on her account that he wishes to become suddenly rich."

This supposition was a correct one, as we know. It did not, however, argue unusual shrewdness on the part of the detective, since no motive is more common in such cases.

Dan returned to the office promptly, and nothing of importance occurred during the remainder of the day.

When Mr. Talbot was preparing to leave, he called in the janitor.

"You may lock the safe," he said.

"Very well, sir."

"By the way, you may use the word 'Hartford' for the combination."

"Very well, sir."

"Be particularly careful, as the safe contains a package of money—twelve thousand dollars."

"Wouldn't it have been better to deposit it in the bank, Mr. Talbot?"

"Yes, but it was not till the bank closed that I decided not to use it to-day. However, it is secure in the safe," he added, carelessly.

"I have no doubt of that, Mr. Talbot."

Mr. Talbot put on his coat and departed.

In turning a street corner, he brushed against a rough-looking man who was leaning against a lamp-post.

"I beg your pardon," said the book-keeper, politely.

"What did you say?" growled Bill.

"Hartford," said Talbot, in a low tone.

"All right, sir. If you apologize it's all correct."

"They've got the word," said Talbot to himself. "Now the responsibility rests with them. Now I will go and see Virginia."

His face flushed, and his eyes lighted up with joy, as he uttered her name. He was deeply in love, and he felt that at last he was in a position to win the consent of the object of his passion. He knew, or, rather, he suspected her to be coldly selfish, but he was infatuated. It was enough that he had fulfilled the conditions imposed upon him. In a few days he would be on his way to Europe with the lady of his love. Matters were so arranged that the loss of the twelve thousand dollars would be credited to the burglars. He would escape suspicion. If his European journey should excite a shadow of suspicion, nothing could be proved, and he could represent that he had been lucky in stock speculations, as even now he intended to represent to Miss Conway.

He was not afraid that she would be deeply shocked by his method of obtaining money, but he felt that it would be better not to trust her with a secret, which, if divulged, would compromise his safety.

"Is Miss Conway at home?" he inquired.

Yes, Miss Conway was at home, and she soon entered the room, smiling upon him inquiringly.

"Well," she said, "have you any news to tell me?"

"Virginia, are you ready to fulfill your promise?" asked Talbot, eagerly.

"What promise?"

"You know, surely."

"I make so many promises, you know," she said, fencing.

"Your promise to marry me."

"But there were conditions to that."

"Suppose that the conditions are fulfilled, Virginia?"

"Do you really mean so?" she asked, betraying strong interest now. "Have you been lucky in stocks?"

"I took your advice, Virginia. I dared everything, and I have succeeded."

"As you might have done before, had you listened to me. How much did you make?"

"Ten thousand dollars—the amount you required."

The girl's eyes sparkled.

"And you will take me to Europe?" she said. "We will make the grand tour?"

"As soon as you please."

"Then you deserve a reward."

She stooped and pressed a kiss lightly upon his cheek.

It was a mercenary kiss, but he was so much in love that he felt repaid for the wrong and wickedness he had done. It would not always be so, even if he should never be detected, but for the moment he was happy.

"Now let us form our plans," he said. "Will you marry me to-morrow evening?"

"But that gives me no time."

"You need no time. We will call on a clergyman, quietly, to-morrow evening, and in fifteen minutes we shall be man and wife. On Saturday a steamer leaves for Europe. We will start then."

"Oh, that will be nice. I can hardly believe that I shall so soon realize the dreams of years. I want to go to Paris first."

"Anywhere you please. Your wish shall be my law."

"How can you be spared from your business?" asked Virginia, after a pause.

"I will plead ill health—anything. There will be no difficulty about that."

"Shall I tell my aunt?"

"No; not till you are almost ready to start."

"Why not?"

"It is better that there should be no gossip about it. Besides, your aunt would probably be scandalized by our hasty marriage, and insist upon delay. That's something we should neither of us be willing to consent to."

"No, for it would interfere with our European trip."

"You consent, then, to my plans?"

"Yes; I will give you your own way this time," said Virginia, smiling.

"And you will insist on having your own way ever after?"

"Of course," she said; "isn't that right?"

"I am afraid I must consent, at any rate; but, since you are to rule, you must not be a tyrant, my darling."

Talbot agreed to stay to dinner; indeed, it had been his intention from the first. He remained till the city clocks struck eleven, and then took leave of Miss Conway at the door.

He set out for his boarding-place, his mind filled with thoughts of his coming happiness, when a hand was laid on his arm.

He wheeled suddenly, and his glance fell on a quiet man—the detective.

"What's wanted?" he asked, not dreaming of the truth.

"You must come with me, Mr. Talbot," was the reply. "You are suspected of robbing the firm that employs you."

"This is absurd nonsense!" exclaimed Talbot, putting on a bold face, though his heart sank within him.

"I hope so; but you must accompany me, and submit to a search. If my suspicions are unfounded, I will apologize."

"Hands off, fellow! I believe you intend to rob me. I will give you into custody."

The detective put a whistle to his mouth, and his summons brought a policeman.

"Take this man into custody," he said.

"This is an outrage!" exclaimed Talbot; but he was very pale.

"You will be searched at the station-house, Mr. Talbot," said the detective. "I hope nothing will be found to criminate you. If not, you shall go free."

Talbot, with a swift motion, drew something from his pocket, and hurled it into the darkness. But he was observed.

The detective darted after it, and brought it back.

"This is what I wanted," he said. "Policeman, you will bear witness that it was in Mr. Talbot's possession. I fear we shall have to detain you a considerable time, sir."

Talbot did not utter a word. Fate had turned against him, and he was sullen and desperate.

"How did they suspect?" he asked himself; but no answer suggested itself.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE CALM BEFORE THE STORM.

In the house on Houston street, Bill wasted little regret on the absence of his wife and child. Neither did he trouble himself to speculate as to where she had gone.

"I'm better without her," he said to his confederate, Mike. "She's always a-whinin' and complainin', Nance is. It makes me sick to see her. If I speak a rough word to her, and it stands to reason a chap can't always be soft-spoken, she begins to cry. I like to see a woman have some spirit, I do."

"They may have too much," said Mike, shrugging his shoulders. "My missus ain't much like yours. She don't cry, she don't. If I speak rough to her, she ups with something and flings it at my head. That's her style."

"And what do you do?" asked Bill, in some curiosity.

"Oh, I just leave her to get over it; that's the best way."

"Is it?" said Bill, grimly. "Why, you're not half

a man, you ain't. Do you want to know what I'd do if a woman raised her hand against me?"

"Well, what would you do?"

"I'd beat her till she couldn't see!" said Bill, fiercely; and he looked as if he was quite capable of it.

"I don't know," said Mike. "You haven't got a wife like mine."

"I just wish I had. I'd tame her."

"She ain't easy to tame."

"Just you take me round there some time, Mike. If she has a tantrum, turn her over to me."

Mike did not answer. He was not as great a ruffian as Bill, and the proposal did not strike him favorably.

His wife was certainly a virago, and though strong above the average, he was her superior in physical strength, but something hindered him from using it to subdue her. So he was often overmatched by the shrill-voiced vixen, who knew very well that he would not proceed to extremities. Had she been Bill's wife, she would have had to yield, or there would have been bloodshed.

"I say, Bill," said Mike, suddenly, "how much did your wife hear of our plans last night?"

"Nothing."

"She might."

"If she had she would not dare to say a word," said Bill, carelessly.

"You don't know. Women like to use their tongues."

"She knows I'd kill her if she betrayed me," said Bill. "There ain't no use considerin' that."

"Well, I'm glad you think so. It would be awkward if the police got wind of it."

"They won't."

"What do you think of that chap that's puttin' us up to it?"

"I don't like him, but I like his money."

"Five hundred dollars a-piece ain't much for the risk we run."

"We'll have more."

"How?"

"If we don't find more in the safe, we'll bleed him when all's over. He'll be in our power."

"Well, Bill, you know best. You've got a better head nor me."

"And a stouter heart, man. You're always afeared of something."

It was true that Bill was the leading spirit. He was reckless and desperate, while Mike was apt to count the cost, and dwell upon the danger incurred.

They had been associated more than once in unlawful undertakings; and though both had served a

short term of imprisonment, they had in general escaped scot-free.

It was Bill who hung round the store, and who received from Talbot at the close of the afternoon the "combination," which was to make the opening of the safe comparatively easy."

"It's a good thing to have a friend inside," he said to his confederate. "Our money is as good as made."

"There'll be the janitor to dispose of," suggested Mike.

"Leave him to me. I'll knock him on the head."

"Don't kill him if you can help it, Bill. Murder has an ugly look, and they'll look out twice as sharp for a murderer as for a burglar. Besides, swingin' ain't pleasant."

"Never you mind. I'll only stun him a little. He can wake up when we're gone, but we'll tie him so he can't give the alarm."

"How cool you take things, Bill!"

"Do I? Well, it's my business. You just leave everything to me. Obey orders, and I'll bring you out all right."

So the day passed, and darkness came on. It was the calm before the storm.

CHAPTER XXIV.

OLD JACK, THE JANITOR.

The janitor, or watchman, was a sturdy old man, who in early life had been a sailor. Some accident had made him lame, and this incapacitated him for his early vocation. It had not, however, impaired his physical strength, which was very great, and Mr. Rogers was glad to employ him in his present capacity. Of his fidelity there was no question.

When Jack Green—Jack was the name he generally went by—heard of the contemplated burglary, he was excited and pleased. It was becoming rather tame to him to watch night after night without interruption, and he fancied he should like a little scrimmage. He even wanted to withstand the burglars single-handed.

"What's the use of callin' in the police?" he urged, "It's only two men, and old Jack is a match for two."

"You're a strong man, Jack," said Dan, "but one of the burglars is as strong as you are. I have seen him, you know. He's broad-shouldered and big-chested."

"I ain't afraid of him," said Jack, defiantly.

"Perhaps not, but there's another man, too. You couldn't overcome both."

"I don't know about that."

But Jack finally yielded, though reluctantly, and three policemen were admitted about eight o'clock, and carefully secreted, to act when necessary. Jack pleaded for the privilege of meeting the burglars first, and the privilege was granted, partly in order that they might be taken in the act. Old Jack was instructed how to act, and though it was a part not wholly in accordance with his fearless spirit, he finally agreed to do as he was told.

It is not necessary to explain how the burglars effected their entrance. This was effected about twelve o'clock, and by the light of a dark-lantern Bill and Mike advanced cautiously toward the safe.

At this point old Jack made his appearance, putting on an air of alarm and dismay.

"Who are you?" he demanded, in a tone which he partially succeeded in making tremulous.

Bill took up the reply.

"Are you the janitor?" he asked.

"Yes, gentlemen. What do you want?"

"Keep quiet, and we will do you no harm. We want you to open the safe."

"I can't do that, gentlemen. I can't betray my trust."

"All right; I'll do it myself. Give us the key. What's the combination?"

"Hartford."

Bill glanced at Mike significantly. The word agreed with the information they had received from Talbot. It served to convince them that the janitor had indeed succumbed, and could be relied upon. There was no suspicion in the mind of either that there was any one else in the establishment, and they felt moderately secure from interruption.

"Here, old fellow, hold the lantern while we go to work. Just behave yourself, and we'll give you ten dollars—shall we, Mike?"

"Yes," answered Mike; "I'm agreed."

"It'll look as if I was helpin' to rob my master," objected Jack.

"Oh, never mind about that; he won't know it. When all is over we'll tie you up, so that it will look as if you couldn't help yourself. What do you say?"

Jack felt like making a violent assault upon the man who was offering him a bribe, but he controlled his impulse, and answered:

"I'm a poor man, and ten dollars will come handy."

"All right," said Bill, convinced by this time that Jack's fidelity was very cheaply purchased. He plumed himself on his success in converting the janitor into an ally, and felt that the way was clear before him.

"Mike, give the lantern to this old man, and come here and help me."

Old Jack took the lantern, laughing in his sleeve at the ease with which he had gulled the burglars, while they kneeled before the safe.

It was then that, looking over his shoulder, he noticed the stealthy approach of the policemen, accompanied by Dan. He could content himself no longer. Setting down the lantern, he sprang upon the back of Bill as he was crouching before him, exclaiming:

"Now, you villain, I have you!"

CHAPTER XXV.

THE BURGLARY.

The attack was so sudden and unexpected that Bill, powerful as he was, was prostrated, and for an instant interposed no resistance. But this was not for long.

"You'll repent this, you old idiot!" he hissed between his closed teeth, and, in spite of old Jack's efforts to keep him down, he forced his way up.

At the same moment Mike, who had been momentarily dazed by the sudden attack, seized the janitor, and, between them both, old Jack's life was likely to be of a very brief tenure. But here the reinforcements appeared, and changed the aspect of the battle.

One burly policeman seized Bill by the collar, while Mike was taken in hand by another, and their heavy clubs fell with merciless force on the heads of the two captives.

In the new surprise Jack found himself a free man, and, holding up the lantern, cried, exultingly:

"If I am an old idiot, I've got the better of you, you scoundrels! You'll open the safe, will you?"

Bill looked about him doggedly. It was hard for him to give in, but the fight was too unequal.

"Mike," said he, "this is a plant. I wish I had that cursed book-keeper here; he led us into this."

"Is it Mr. Talbot you mean?" asked the janitor.

"Yes," answered Bill; "he put us up to this. Curse him!"

"No need to curse him," said Jack, dryly; "he meant you to succeed."

"Didn't he tell you we were coming to-night?"

"Not he."

"How did you find it out, then?" asked Bill, quickly.

"Not through him. He was watched, for we suspected him. What did he promise you?"

"Five hundred dollars apiece."

"Was that all?"

"It wasn't enough; but we should have got more out of him."

"Before you go away with your prisoners," said Jack to the policeman, "I wish to open the safe before you, to see if I am right in my suspicions. Mr. Talbot drew over ten thousand dollars from the bank to-day, and led us to think that he deposited it in the safe. I wish to ascertain, in the presence of witnesses, how much he placed there, and how much he carried away."

"Go ahead," said the oldest policeman.

The janitor proceeded to open the safe.

"Did we have the right combination?" asked Bill.

"No."

"That cursed book-keeper deceived us, then."

"You are mistaken. He was himself deceived. I gave him the wrong word."

"Curse you, then!" said Bill, savagely.

"Suit yourself, Mr. Burglar," said old Jack, indifferently. "There's an old saying, 'Curses, like chickens, still come home to roost.' Your cursing won't hurt me any."

"If my curses don't my fists may!" retorted Bill, with a malignant look.

"You won't have a chance to carry out your threats for some years to come, if you get your deserts," said Jack, by no means terrified. "I've only done my duty, and I'm ready to do it again whenever needed."

By this time the safe was open; all present saw the envelope of money labeled "$12,000."

The two burglars saw the prize which was to have rewarded their efforts and risk with a tantalizing sense of defeat. They had been so near success, only to be foiled at last, and consigned to a jail for a term of years.

"Curse the luck!" muttered Bill, bitterly, and in his heart Mike said amen.

"Gentlemen, I will count this money before you," said the janitor, as he opened the parcel.

The count was quickly accomplished. It resulted, as my readers already know, in the discovery that, in place of twelve thousand, the parcel contained but one thousand dollars.

"Eleven thousand dollars short!" said Jack. "Gentlemen, will you take notice of this? Of course it is clear where the rest is gone—Talbot carried it away with him."

"Where is he?" inquired one of the policemen. "He ought to be pursued."

"By this time he is in custody," said Jack.

"Look here, old man, who engineered this thing?" demanded Bill.

"Come here, Dan," said Jack, summoning our hero, who modestly stood in the background. "Mr. Burglar, this boy is entitled to the credit of defeating you. We should have known nothing of your intentions but for Dan, the Detective."

"He!" said Bill, scornfully. "Why, I could crush him with one hand."

"Force is a good thing, but brains are better," said Jack. "Dan here has got a better head-piece than any of us."

"You've done yourself credit, boy," said the chief policeman. "When I have a difficult case I'll send for you."

"You are giving me more credit than I deserve," said Dan, modestly.

"If I ever get out of jail, I'll remember you," said Bill, scowling. "I wouldn't have minded so much if it had been a man, but to be laid by the heels by a boy like you—that's enough to make me sick."

"You've said enough, my man," said the policeman who had him in charge. "Come along, will you?"

The two prisoners, escorted by their captors, made their unwilling way to the station-house. They were duly tried, and were sentenced to a ten years' term of imprisonment.

As for Talbot, he tried to have it believed that he took the money found on him because he distrusted the honesty of the janitor; but this statement fell to the ground before Dan's testimony and that of Bill's wife.

He, too, received a heavy sentence, and it was felt that he only got his just deserts.

* * * * * * *

On the morning after the events recorded above, Mr. Rogers called Dan into the counting-room.

"Dan," he said, "I wish to express to you my personal obligations for the admirable manner in which you have managed the affair of this burglary."

"Thank you, sir," said Dan.

"I am convinced that but for you I should have lost twelve thousand dollars. It would not have ruined me, to be sure, but it would have been a heavy loss."

"Such a loss as that would have ruined me," said Dan, smiling.

"So I should suppose," assented his employer. "I predict, however, that the time will come when you can stand such a loss, and have something left."

"I hope so, sir."

"As there must always be a beginning, suppose you begin with that."

Mr. Rogers had turned to his desk and written a check, which he handed to Dan.

This was the way it read:

No. 375.

PARK NATIONAL BANK.

Pay to Dan Mordaunt or order One Thousand Dollars.

($1,000.) BARTON & ROGERS.

Dan took the check, supposing it might be for twenty dollars or so. When he saw the amount, he started in excitement and incredulity.

"One thousand dollars!" he repeated, in bewilderment.

"Yes," said Mr. Rogers, smiling. "It is a large sum for a boy like you, Dan. I hope you will invest it wisely."

"But, sir, you don't mean all this for me?" said Dan.

"Indeed I do. It is less than ten per cent on the money you have saved for us."

"How can I thank you for your kindness, sir?" said Dan, gratefully.

"By continuing to serve us faithfully. By the way, what wages do we pay you?"

"Six dollars a week."

"It is too little. From this time you will draw ten dollars."

"You have made me rich, Mr. Rogers," said Dan, gratefully.

"It is a little better than selling papers in front of the Astor House, isn't it, Dan?"

"A good deal, sir."

"I hope you will continue to prosper. Now, Dan, let me give you two pieces of advice."

"I wish you would, sir."

"First, put this money in a good savings-bank, and don't draw upon it unless you are obliged to. Let it be a nest-egg."

"I mean to do that, sir."

"And next, spend a part of your earnings in improving your education. You have already had unusual advantages for a boy of your age, but you

should still be learning. It may help you, in a business point of view, to understand book-keeping."

"I will learn it, sir."

Dan not only did this, but resumed the study of both French and German, of which he had some elementary knowledge, and advanced rapidly in all.

CHAPTER XXVI.

DAN LEARNS TO DANCE.

Several months passed without any incidents worth recording.

Punctually every month Dan received a remittance of sixty dollars through a foreign banker, whose office was near Wall street.

Of this sum it may be remembered that ten dollars were to be appropriated to Althea's dress.

Of the little girl it may be said she was very happy in her new home. She formed a strong attachment for Mrs. Mordaunt, whom she called mamma, while she always looked forward with delight to Dan's return at night.

Mrs. Mordaunt was very happy in the child's companionship, and found the task of teaching her very congenial.

But for the little girl she would have had many lonely hours, since Dan was absent all day on business.

"I don't know what I shall do, Althea, when you go to school," she said one day.

"I don't want to go to school. Let me stay at home with you, mamma."

"For the present I can teach you, my dear, but the time will come when for your own good it will be better to go to school. I cannot teach you as well as the teachers you will find there."

"You know ever so much, mamma. Don't you know everything?"

Mrs. Mordaunt smiled.

"Compared with you, my dear, I seem to know a great deal, but there are others who know much more."

Althea was too young as yet, however, to attend school, and the happy home life continued.

Mrs. Mordaunt and Dan often wondered how long their mysterious ward was to remain with them. Had she a mother living? If so, how could that mother voluntarily forego her child's society?

These were questions they sometimes asked themselves, but no answer suggested itself. They were content to have them remain unanswered, so long as Althea might remain with them.

The increase of Dan's income, and the large sum he had on interest, would have enabled them to live comfortably even without the provision made for their young ward.

As it was they could do better. Dan felt himself justified in indulging in a little extravagance.

"Mother," said he, one evening, "I am thinking of taking a course of lessons in dancing."

"What has put that into your head, Dan?"

"Julia Rogers is to have a birthday party in two or three months, and I think from a hint her father dropped to-day I shall have an invitation. I shall feel awkward if I don't know how to dance. Besides——"

Here Dan hesitated.

"Well, Dan, what besides?"

"Tom Carver will be sure to be there, and if I don't dance, or if I am awkward, he will be sure to sneer at me."

"Will that make you feel bad, Dan?"

"Not exactly, but I don't want to appear at disadvantage when he is around. If I have been a newsboy, I want to show that I can take the part of gentleman as well as he."

"Does the ability to dance make a gentleman, Dan?"

"No, mother, but I should feel awkward without it. I don't want to be a wall-flower. What do you say to my plan, mother?"

"Carry it out by all means, Dan. There is no reason why you shouldn't hold up your head with any of

them," and Mrs. Mordaunt's eyes rested with pride on the handsome face and manly expression of her son.

"You are a little prejudiced in my favor, mother," said Dan, smiling. "If I were as awkward as a cat in a strange garret, you wouldn't see it."

"I am not quite blind, Dan."

Dan accordingly decided to take lessons in dancing. He selected a fashionable teacher, although the price was high, for he thought it might secure him desirable acquaintances, purchased a handsome suit of clothes, and soon became very much interested in the lessons. He had a quick ear, a good figure, and a natural grace of movement, which soon made him noticeable in the class, and he was quite in demand among the young ladies as a partner.

He was no less a favorite socially, being agreeable as well as good-looking.

"Mr. Mordaunt," said the professor, "I wish all my scholars did me as much credit as you do. You dance beautifully."

"Thank you, sir," said Dan, modestly, but he felt gratified.

By the time the invitation came Dan had no fears as to acquitting himself creditably.

"I hope Tom Carver will be there," he said to his mother, as he was dressing for the party.

CHAPTER XXVII.

IN THE DRESSING-ROOM.

Mr. Rogers lived in a handsome brown-stone-front house up town.

As Dan approached, he saw the entire house brilliantly lighted. He passed beneath a canopy, over carpeted steps, to the front door, and rang the bell.

The door was opened by a stylish-looking colored man, whose grand air showed that he felt the importance and dignity of his position.

As Dan passed in he said:

"Gentlemen's dressing-room third floor back."

With a single glance through the open door at the lighted parlors, where several guests were already assembled, Dan followed directions, and went up stairs.

Entering the dressing-room, he saw a boy carefully arranging his hair before the glass.

"That's my friend, Tom Carver," said Dan to himself.

Tom was so busily engaged at his toilet that he didn't at once look at the new guest. When he had

leisure to look up, he seemed surprised, and remarked, superciliously:

"I didn't expect to see *you* here."

"Why not?" demanded Dan, who understood his meaning.

"Are you engaged to look after this room? If so, just brush me."

"With all my heart, if you'll brush me," answered Dan, partly offended and partly amused.

"What do you mean?" demanded Tom, haughtily.

"Just what I say. One good turn deserves another."

"Our positions are rather different, I think."

"How so? You are a guest of Miss Rogers, and so am I."

"You don't mean to say that you are going down into the parlor?"

"Why not?"

"A boy who sells papers in front of the Astor House is not a suitable guest at a fashionable party."

"That is not your affair," said Dan, coldly. "But it is not true that I sell papers anywhere."

"Oh, I forgot. You're a shop-boy now. You used to sell papers, though."

"And I will again, if necessary," answered Dan, as he took Tom's place in front of the glass and began to arrange his toilet.

Then, for the first time, Tom took notice that Dan was dressed as well as himself, in a style with which the most captious critic could not find fault. Tom was both surprised and disappointed. He would have liked to see Dan in awkward, ill-fitting, or shabby clothes. It seemed to him that an ex-newsboy had no right to dress so well, and he was greatly puzzled to understand how he could afford it.

"Where did you borrow those clothes?" he asked, impudently.

"Where did you borrow yours?" retorted Dan.

"Don't be saucy,"

"You set me the example."

"It is not remarkable that I should be well dressed. I can afford it."

"So can I," answered Dan, laconically.

"Do you mean to say that you bought that suit and paid for it?"

"I do."

"It must have taken all your money."

"You are very kind to take so much interest in me. It may relieve your mind to see this."

Dan took a roll of bills from his pocket, and displayed them to the astonished Tom.

"I don't see where you got so much money," said Tom, mystified.

"I've got more in the bank," said Dan. "I men-

tion it to you that you needn't feel bad about my extravagance in buying a party suit."

"I wouldn't have come to this party if I had been you," said Tom, changing his tone.

"Why not?"

"You'll be so awkward, you know. You don't know any one except Miss Rogers, who, of course, invited you out of pity, not expecting you would accept."

"Did she tell you so?" asked Dan, smiling.

"No, but it stands to reason."

"You forget I know you," said Dan, smiling again.

"I beg you won't presume upon our former slight acquaintance," said Tom, hastily. "I shall be so busily occupied that I really can't give you any attention."

"Then I must shift for myself, I suppose," said Dan, good-humoredly. "Shall we go down?"

"Go first, if you like," said Tom, superciliously. "I will follow directly."

"He doesn't want to go down with me," thought Dan. "Perhaps I shall surprise him a little;" and he made his way down stairs.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

DAN AT THE PARTY.

As Dan entered the parlors he saw the young lady in whose honor the party was given only a few feet distant.

He advanced with perfect ease, and paid his respects.

"I am very glad to see you here this evening, Mr. Mordaunt," said Julia, cordially.

"What a handsome boy he is!" she thought. "I had no idea he would look so well."

Mentally she pronounced him the handsomest young gentleman present.

"Take your partners for a quadrille, young gentlemen," announced the master of ceremonies.

"Are you engaged, Miss Rogers?" asked Dan.

"Not as yet," answered the young lady, smiling.

"Then may I have the honor?"

"Certainly."

So it happened that as Tom Carver entered the room, he beheld, to his intense surprise and disgust, Dan leading the young hostess to her place in the quadrille.

"What a cheek that fellow has!" said Tom to himself. "I suppose he never attempted to dance in his life. It will be fun to watch his awkwardness. I am very much surprised that Julia should condescend to dance with him—a common newsboy."

At first Tom thought he wouldn't dance, but Mrs. Rogers approaching said:

"Tom, there's Jane Sheldon. She has no partner."

Accordingly Tom found himself leading up a little girl of eight.

There was no place except in the quadrille in which Dan and Julia Rogers were to dance. Tom found himself one of the "sides."

"Good-evening, Julia," he said, catching the eye of Miss Rogers.

"Good-evening, Tom. You are late."

"I am too late to be your partner."

"Yes, but you see I am not left a wall-flower," said the young lady, smiling. "Mr. Mordaunt kindly relieved me of that apprehension."

"You are fortunate," said Tom, sneering.

"I leave my partner to thank you for that compliment," said Julia, determined not to gratify Tom by appearing to understand the sneer.

"There's no occasion," said Tom, rudely.

"I am glad of it," said Dan, "for I am so unused

to compliments that I am afraid I should answer awkwardly."

"I can very well believe that," returned Tom, significantly.

Julia did not smile. She looked offended rather for she felt that rudeness to her partner reflected upon herself.

But here the music struck up, and the quadrille began.

"Now for awkwardness," said Tom to himself, and he watched Dan closely.

But, to his surprise, nothing could be neater or better modulated than Dan's movements. Instead of hopping about, as Tom thought he would, he was thoroughly graceful.

"Where could the fellow have learned to dance?" he asked himself, in disappointment.

Julia was gratified; for, to tell the truth, she too had not been altogether without misgivings on the subject of Dan's dancing, and, being herself an excellent dancer, she would have found it a little disagreeable if Dan had proved awkward.

The quadrille proceeded, and Tom was chagrined that the newsboy, as he mentally termed Dan, had proved a better dancer than himself.

"Oh, well, it's easy to dance in a quadrille," he said

to himself, by way of consolation. "He won't venture on any of the round dances."

But as Dan was leading Julia to her seat he asked her hand in the next polka, and was graciously accepted.

He then bowed and left her, knowing that he ought not to monopolize the young hostess.

Although Tom had told Dan not to expect any attentions from him, he was led by curiosity to accost our hero.

"It seems that newsboys dance," said he.

"Does it?" asked Dan, indifferently.

"But it was not in very good taste for you to engage Miss Rogers for the first dance."

"Why not?"

"It was making yourself too prominent."

"Somebody had to be prominent, or Miss Rogers would have been left to dance by herself."

"There are others who would have made more suitable partners for her."

"Yourself, for instance."

"Yes."

"I am sorry to have stood in your way."

"Oh, you needn't mind. I shall have plenty of opportunities of dancing with her, and you won't. I suppose she took pity on you, as you know no other young lady here."

Just then a pretty girl, beautifully dressed, approached Dan.

"Good-evening, Mr. Mordaunt," she said, offering her hand with a beaming smile.

"Good-evening, Miss Carroll," said Dan. "Are you engaged for the galop?"

Miss Carroll shook her head.

"Then will you give me the pleasure?"

In a minute Dan was whirling round the room with the young lady, greatly to Tom's amazement, for Edith Carroll was from a family of high social standing, living on Murray Hill.

"How in the duse does Dan Mordaunt know that girl?" Tom asked himself, with a frown. "They spoke as if they were acquainted."

To Tom's further disappointment Dan danced as gracefully in the galop as in the quadrille.

When the galop was over, Dan promenaded with another young lady, whose acquaintance he had made at dancing-school, and altogether seemed as much at his ease as if he had been attending parties all his life.

Tom managed to obtain Edith Carroll as a partner.

"I didn't know you were acquainted with Dan Mordaunt," he said.

"Oh, yes, I know him very well. Doesn't he dance charmingly?"

"Humph!" said Tom, not very well pleased. "I thought him rather awkward."

"How can you say so, Mr. Carver? Why I think he dances *beautifully*, and so do all the girls."

"How do the girls know how he dances?"

"Why he goes to our dancing-school. The professor says he is his best pupil. We all like to dance with him."

"That's fortunate for him," said Tom, with a sneer. "Perhaps he may become a dancing-master in time."

"He would make a good one, but I don't think he's very likely to do that."

"It would be a good thing for him. He is poor, you know."

"No, I don't. I am sure he dresses well. He is as well-dressed as any young gentleman here."

This was true, and Tom resented it. He felt that Dan had no right to dress well.

"He ought not to spend so much money on dress when he has his mother to support," he said, provoked.

"It seems to me you take a great deal of interest in Mr. Mordaunt," said the young beauty, pointedly.

"Oh, no; he can do as he likes for all me, but, of

course, when a boy in his position dresses as if he were rich one can't help noticing it."

"I am sure he can't be very poor, or he could not attend Dodworth's dancing-school. At any rate I like to dance with him, and I don't care whether he's poor or rich."

Presently Tom saw Dan dancing the polka with Julia Rogers, and with the same grace that he had exhibited in the other dances.

He felt jealous, for he fancied himself a favorite with Julia, because their families being intimate, he saw a good deal of her.

On the whole Tom was not enjoying the party. He did succeed, however, in obtaining the privilege of escorting Julia to supper.

Just in front of him was Dan, escorting a young lady from Fifth avenue.

"Mr. Mordaunt appears to be enjoying himself," said Julia Rogers.

"Yes, he has plenty of cheek," muttered Tom.

"Excuse me, Tom, but do you think such expressions suitable for such an occasion as this?"

"I am sorry you don't like it, but I never saw a more forward or presuming fellow than this Dan Mordaunt."

"I beg you to keep your opinion to yourself," said Julia Rogers, with dignity. "I find he is a great

favorite with all the young ladies here. I had no idea he knew so many of them."

Tom gave it up. It seemed to him that all the girls were infatuated with a common newsboy, while his vanity was hurt by finding himself quite distanced in the race.

About twelve o'clock the two boys met in the dressing-room.

"You seemed to enjoy yourself," said Tom, coldly.

"Yes, thanks to your kind attentions," answered Dan, with a smile. "It is pleasant to meet old friends, you know. By the way, I suppose we shall meet at Miss Carroll's party."

"Are *you* to be invited?" asked Tom, in astonishment.

"So the young lady tells me," answered Dan, smiling.

"I suppose *you'll* be giving a fashionable party next," said Tom, with a sneer.

"Consider yourself invited if I do. Good-night, and pleasant dreams."

But Dan's dreams were by no means sweet that night.

When he reached home, it was to hear of a great and startling misfortune.

CHAPTER XXIX.

A NE'ER DO WELL.

At half-past twelve Dan ascended the stairs to his mother's room. He had promised to come in and tell her how he had enjoyed himself at the party. He was in excellent spirits on account of the flattering attentions he had received. It was in this frame of mind that he opened the door. What was his surprise, even consternation, when his mother advanced to meet him with tearful eyes and an expression of distress.

"Oh, Dan, I am so glad you have got home!" she ejaculated.

"What is the matter, mother? Are you sick?" asked Dan.

"I am quite well, Dan; but Althea——"

And Mrs. Mordaunt burst into tears.

"What has happened to Althea? Is she sick?" asked Dan, alarmed.

"We have lost her, Dan."

"Lost her! You don't mean she is——"

He couldn't finish the sentence, but his mother divined what he meant.

"Not dead, thank God!" she said, "but she has disappeared—she has been stolen."

"You don't mean it, mother!" exclaimed Dan, startled and grieved. "Tell me about it."

Mrs. Mordaunt told what she knew, but that related only to the particulars of the abduction. We are in a position to tell the reader more, but it will be necessary to go back for a month, and transfer the scene to another continent.

In a spacious and handsomely furnished apartment at the West End of London sat the lady who had placed Althea in charge of the Mordaunts. She was deep in thought, and that not of an agreeable nature.

"I fear," she said to herself, "that trouble awaits me. John Hartley, whom I supposed to be in California, is certainly in London. I cannot be mistaken in his face, and I certainly saw him in Hyde Park today. Did he see me? I don't know, but I fear he did. If so, he will not long delay in making his appearance. Then I shall be persecuted, but I must be firm. He shall not learn through me where Althea is. He is her father, it is true, but he has forfeited all claim to her guardianship. A confirmed gambler and drunkard, he would soon waste her fortune, bequeathed her by her poor mother. He can have no possible claim to it; for, apart from his having had no hand in

leaving it to her, he was divorced from my poor sister before her death."

At this point there was a knock at the door of the room.

"Come in," said the lady.

There entered a young servant-maid, who courtesied, and said:

"Mrs. Vernon, there is a gentleman who wishes to see you."

"Can it be Hartley?" thought the lady, with quick suspicion.

"Did he give his name?" she asked.

"Yes, mum; he said his name was Bancroft."

"Bancroft! I know no one of that name," mused the lady. "Well, Margaret, you may show him up, and you may remain in the anteroom within call."

Her eyes were fixed upon the door with natural curiosity, when her visitor entered.

Instantly her face flushed, and her eyes sparkled with anger.

"John Hartley!" she exclaimed.

The visitor smiled mockingly.

"I see you know me, Harriet Vernon," he said. "It is some time since we met, is it not? I am charmed, I am sure, to see my sister-in-law looking so well."

He sank into a chair without waiting for an invitation.

"When did you change your name to Bancroft?" demanded the lady, abruptly.

"Oh," he said, showing his teeth, "that was a little ruse. I feared you would have no welcome for John Hartley, notwithstanding our near relationship, and I was forced to sail under false colors."

"It was quite in character," said Mrs. Vernon, coldly; "you were always false. But you need not claim relationship. The slender tie that connected us was broken when my sister obtained a divorce from you."

"You think so, my lady," said the visitor, dropping his tone of mocking badinage, and regarding her in a menacing manner, "but you were never more mistaken. You may flatter yourself that you are rid of me, but you flatter yourself in vain."

"Do you come here to threaten me, John Hartley?"

"I come here to ask for my child. Where is Althea?"

"Where you cannot get at her," answered Mrs. Vernon, coldly.

"Don't think to put me off in that way," he said, fiercely. "I will know where she is."

"Don't think to terrify me, John Hartley," said the

lady, contemptuously. "I am not so easily alarmed as your poor wife."

Hartley looked at her as if he would have assaulted her had he dared, but she knew very well that he did not dare. He was a bully, but he was a coward.

"You refuse, then, to tell me what you have done with my child?" he demanded, at length.

"I do."

"Take care, madam! A father has some rights, and the law will not permit his child to be kept from him."

"Does your anxiety to see Althea arise from parental affection?" she asked, in a sarcastic tone.

"Never mind what it springs from. I have a right to the custody of my child."

"I suppose you have a right to waste her fortune also at the gaming-table."

"I have a right to act as my child's guardian," he retorted.

"A fine guardian you would make!" she said, contemptuously.

"Why should I not?" he asked, sulkily.

"Why should you not, John Hartley? Do I need to answer the question? You ill-treated and abused her mother. You wasted half her fortune. Fortunately, she escaped from you before it was all gone. But you shortened her life, and she did not long sur-

vive the separation. It was her last request that I should care for her child—that I should, above all, keep her out of your clutches. I made that promise, and I mean to keep it."

"You poisoned my wife's mind against me," he said. "But for your cursed interference we should never have separated."

"You are right, perhaps, in your last statement. I certainly did urge my sister to leave you. I obtained her consent to the application for a divorce, but as to poisoning her mind against you, there was no need of that. By your conduct and your treatment you destroyed her love and forfeited her respect, and she saw the propriety of the course which I recommended."

"I didn't come here to be lectured. You can spare your invectives, Harriet Vernon. What is past is past. I was not a model husband, perhaps, but I was as good as the average."

"If that is the case, Heaven help the woman who marries!"

"Or the man that marries a woman like you!"

"You are welcome to your opinion of me. I am entirely indifferent to your good or bad opinion. Have you any more to say?"

"Any more to say! I have hardly begun. Is my daughter Althea with you?"

"I don't recognize your right to question me on this subject, but I will answer you. She is not with me."

"Is she in London?"

"I will even answer that question. She is not in London."

"Is she in England?"

"That I will not tell you. You have learned enough."

John Hartley did not answer immediately. He appeared to be occupied with some thought. When he spoke it was in a more conciliatory tone.

"I don't doubt that she is in good hands," he said. "I am sure you will treat her kindly. Perhaps you are a better guardian than I. I am willing to leave her in your hands, but I ought to have some compensation."

"What do you mean?"

"Althea has a hundred thousand dollars, yielding at least five thousand dollars income. Probably her expenses are little more than one-tenth of this sum. While my child is rich I am poor. Give me half her income—say three thousand dollars annually—and I will give you and her no further trouble."

"I thought that was the object of your visit," said Mrs. Vernon, coldly. "I was right in giving you no credit for parental affection. In regard to your propo-

sition, I cannot entertain it. You had one half of my sister's fortune, and you spent it. You have no further claim on her money."

"Is this your final answer?" he demanded, angrily.

"It is."

"Then I swear to you that I will be even with you. I will find the child, and when I do you shall never see her again."

Mrs. Vernon rang the bell.

Margaret entered.

"Margaret," she said, coldly, "will you show this gentleman out?"

John Hartley rose and bowed ironically.

"You are certainly very polite, Harriet Vernon," he said. "You are bold, too, for you are defying me, and that is dangerous. You had better reconsider your determination, before it is too late."

"It will never be too late; I can at any time buy you off," she said, contemptuously. "All you want is money."

"We shall see," he hissed, eying her malignantly.

"Margaret," said Mrs. Vernon, when her visitor had been shown out, "never admit that person again; I am always out to him."

"Yes, mum," said the girl. "I wonder who 'twas," she thought, curiously.

CHAPTER XXX.

HOW HARTLEY GOT A CLEW.

John Hartley, when a young man, had wooed and won Althea's mother. Julia Belmont was a beautiful and accomplished girl, an heiress in her own right, and might have made her choice among at least a dozen suitors. That she should have accepted the hand of John Hartley, a banker's clerk, reputed "fast," was surprising, but a woman's taste in such a case is often hard to explain or justify. Her sister—now Mrs. Vernon—strenuously objected to the match, and by so doing gained the hatred of her future brother-in-law. Opposition proved ineffectual, and Julia Belmont became Mrs. Hartley. Her fortune amounted to two hundred thousand dollars. The trustee and her sister succeeded in obtaining her consent that half of this sum should be settled on herself, and her issue, should she have any.

This proved to be a wise precaution. John Hartley resigned his position immediately after marriage, and declined to enter upon any business.

"Why should I?" he said. "Julia and I have

enough to live upon. If I am out of business I can devote myself more entirely to her."

This reasoning satisfied his young wife, and for a time all went well. But Hartley joined a fashionable club, formed a taste for gambling, indulged in copious libations, not unfrequently staggering home drunk, to the acute sorrow of his wife, and then excesses soon led to ill-treatment. The money, which he could spend in a few years, melted away, and he tried to gain possession of the remainder of his wife's property. But, meanwhile, Althea was born, and a consideration for her child's welfare strengthened the wife in her firm refusal to accede to this unreasonable demand.

"You shall have the income, John," she said—"I will keep none back; but the principal must be kept for Althea."

"You care more for the brat than you do for me," he muttered.

"I care for you both," she answered. "You know how the money would go, John. We should all be left destitute."

"That meddling sister of yours has put you up to this," he said, angrily.

"There was no need of that. It is right, and I have decided for myself."

"Your first duty is to your husband."

"I feel that in refusing I am doing my duty by you."

"It is a strange way—to oppose your husband's wishes. Women ought never to be trusted with money—they don't know how to take care of it."

"You are not the person to say this, John. In five years you have wasted one hundred thousand dollars."

"It was bad luck in investments," he replied.

"I am afraid you are right. Investing money at the gaming-table is not very profitable."

"Do you mean to insult me, madam?" exclaimed Hartley, furiously.

"I am only telling the sad truth, John."

He forgot himself and struck her.

She withdrew, flushed and indignant, for she had spirit enough to resent this outrage, and he left the house in a furious rage.

When Hartley found that there was no hope of carrying his point, all restraint seemed removed. He plunged into worse excesses, and his treatment became so bad that Mrs. Hartley consented to institute proceedings for divorce. It was granted, and the child was given to her. Hartley disappeared for a time. When he returned his wife had died of pneumonia, and her sister—Mrs. Vernon, now a widow—had assumed the care of Althea. An attempt to gain possession of the child induced her to find another

guardian for the child. This was the way Althea had come into the family of our young hero.

Thus much, that the reader may understand the position of affairs, and follow intelligently the future course of the story.

When John Hartley left the presence of his sister-in-law, he muttered maledictions upon her.

"I'll have the child yet, if only to spite her," he muttered, between his teeth. "I won't allow a jade to stand between me and my own flesh and blood. I must think of some plan to circumvent her."

This was not easy. He had absolutely no clew, and little money to assist him in his quest. But Fortune, which does not always favor the brave, but often helps the undeserving, came unexpectedly to his help.

At an American banker's he ran across an old acquaintance—one who had belonged to the same club as himself in years past.

"What are you doing here, Hartley?" he asked.

"Not much. Luck is against me."

"Sorry to hear it. By the way, I was reminded of you not long since."

"How is that?"

"I saw your child in Union Square, in New York."

"Are you sure of it?" asked Hartley, eagerly. "Are you sure it was my child?"

"Of course; I used to see it often, you know. She is a bright little thing."

"Do you know where she lives?" asked Hartley. "Did you follow her?"

"Don't *you* know where she lives?"

"No; her aunt is keeping the child from me. I am very anxious to find her."

"That accounts for it. She was with a middle-aged lady, who evidently was suspicious of me, for she did not bring out the child but once more, and was clearly anxious when I took notice of her."

"She was acting according to instructions, no doubt."

"Very probably."

"I wish you had learned more."

"So do I. Why do they keep *you* away from her?"

"Because she has money, and they wish to keep it in their hands," said Hartley, plausibly. "The aunt is a very mercenary woman. She is living here in London, doubtless on my little girl's fortune."

John Hartley knew that this was not true, for Mrs. Vernon was a rich woman; but it suited his purpose to say so, and the statement was believed by his acquaintance.

"This is bad treatment, Hartley," he said, in a tone of sympathy.

"Isn't it?"

"What are you going to do about it?"

"Try to find out where the child is placed, and get possession of her."

"I wish you success."

This information John Hartley felt to be of value. It narrowed his search, and made success much less difficult.

In order to obtain more definite information, he lay in wait for Mrs. Vernon's servant.

Margaret at first repulsed him, but a sovereign judiciously slipped into her hand convinced her that Hartley was quite the gentleman, and he had no difficulty, by the promise of a future douceur, in obtaining her co-operation.

"What is it you want, sir?" she asked. "If it's no harm you mean my missus——"

"Certainly not, but she is keeping my child from me. You can understand a father's wish to see his child, my dear girl."

"Indeed, I think it's cruel to keep her from you, sir."

"Then look over your mistress' papers and try to obtain the street and number where she is boarding in New York. I have a right to know that."

"Of course you have, sir," said the girl, readily.

So it came about that the girl obtained Dan's address, and communicated it to John Hartley.

As soon as possible afterward Hartley sailed for New York.

"I'll secure the child," he said to himself, exultingly, "and then my sweet sister-in-law must pay roundly for her if she wants her back."

All which attested the devoted love of John Hartley for his child.

CHAPTER XXXI.

ALTHEA'S ABDUCTION.

Arrived in New York, John Hartley lost no time in ascertaining where Dan and his mother lived. In order the better to watch without incurring suspicion, he engaged by the week a room in a house opposite, which, luckily for his purpose, happened to be for rent. It was a front window, and furnished him with a post of observation from which he could see who went in and out of the house opposite.

"Hartley soon learned that it would not be so easy as he had anticipated to gain possession of the little girl. She never went out alone, but always accompanied either by Dan or his mother.

Hartley was disappointed. If, now, Althea were attending school, there would be an opportunity to kidnap her. As it was, he was at his wits' end.

At last, however, opportunity favored him.

On the evening of the party Mrs. Mordaunt chanced to need some small article necessary to the work upon which she was engaged. She might indeed wait until the next day, but she was repairing a vest of Dan's,

which he would need to wear in the morning, and she did not like to disappoint him.

"My child," she said, "I find I must go out a little while."

"What for, mamma?"

"I want to buy some braid to bind Dan's vest. He will want to wear it in the morning."

"May I go with you, mamma?"

"No, my child. You can be reading your picture-book till I come back. I won't be long."

So Mrs. Mordaunt put on her street dress, and left the house in the direction of Eighth avenue, where there was a cheap store at which she often traded.

No sooner did Hartley see her leave the house, as he could readily do, for the night was light, than he hurried to Union Square, scarcely five minutes distant, and hailed a cab-driver.

"Do you want a job, my man?" he asked.

"Yes, sir."

"Can you hold your tongue?"

"Yes, sir, if necessary."

"It is necessary."

"There is nothing wrong, sir, I hope."

"Certainly not. My child has been kidnapped during my absence in Europe. With your help I mean to recover her."

"All right, sir."

"She is in the custody of some designing persons, who keep possession of her on account of a fortune which she is to inherit. She does not know me to be her father, we have been so long separated; but I feel anxious to take her away from her treacherous guardians."

"You are right, sir. I've got a little girl of my own, and I understand your feelings. Where shall we go?"

Hartley gave the proper address. Fifteen minutes afterward the cab drew up before Mrs. Brown's door, and Hartley, springing from it, rang the bell. It so happened that Mrs. Brown was out, and a servant answered the bell. She looked inquiringly at the visitor.

"A lady lives here with a little girl," he said, quickly.

"Yes, sir; Mrs. Mordaunt."

"Precisely; and the little girl is named Althea."

"You are right, sir."

"Mrs. Mordaunt has been run over by a street-car, and been carried into my house. She wishes the little girl to come at once to her."

"Is she much hurt?" asked Nancy, anxiously.

"I am afraid her leg is broken; but I can't wait. Will you bring the little girl down at once?"

"Oh, yes, sir. I'll lose no time."

Nancy went up stairs two steps at a time, and broke into Mrs. Mordaunt's room breathless.

"Put on your hat at once, Miss Althea," she said.

"What for?" asked the child, in surprise.

"Your ma has sent for you."

"But she said she was coming right back."

"She's hurt, and she can't come, and she has sent for you. Don't cry, my dear."

"But how shall I know where to go, Nancy?"

"There's a kind gentleman at the door with a carriage. Your ma has been taken to his home."

The little girl began to cry once more.

"Oh! I'm afraid mamma's been killed," she said.

"No, she hasn't, or how could she send for you?"

This argument tended to reassure Althea, and she put on her little shawl and hat, and hurried down stairs.

Hartley was waiting for her impatiently, fearing that Mrs. Mordaunt would come back sooner than was anticipated, and so interfere with the fulfillment of his plans.

"Is mamma very much hurt?" asked Althea, anxiously.

"So she calls this woman mamma," said Hartley to himself.

"Not very badly, but she cannot come home to-

night. Get into the carriage, and I will tell you about it as we are riding to her."

He hurried the little girl into the carriage, and taking a seat beside her, ordered the cabman to drive on.

He had before directed him to drive to the South Ferry.

"How did mamma get hurt?" asked the child.

"She was crossing the street," said Hartley, "when she got in the way of a carriage and was thrown down and run over."

The child began to cry.

"Oh, she will die!" she exclaimed, sobbing.

"No, she will not die. The carriage was not a heavy one, luckily, and she is only badly bruised. She will be all right in a few days."

John Hartley was a trifle inconsistent in his stories, having told the servant that Mrs. Mordaunt had been run over by a street-car; but in truth he had forgotten the details of his first narrative, and had modified it in the second telling. However, Nancy had failed to tell the child precisely how Mrs. Mordaunt had been hurt, and she was not old enough to be suspicious.

"Where is mamma?" was the little girl's next question.

"She is at my house."

"Where is your house?"

"Not far from here," answered Hartley, evasively.

"Then I shall soon see mamma."

"Is she your mamma?" asked Hartley.

"No, not my own mamma, but I call her so. I love her dearly."

"Where is your own mamma?"

"She is dead."

"Do you remember her?"

"A little."

"Have you a papa?"

"My papa is a very bad man. He treated poor mamma very badly."

"Who told you this?" demanded Hartley, frowning. "Was it Mrs. Mordaunt?"

"No; it was auntie."

"I thought this was some of Harriet Vernon's work," said Hartley to himself. "It seems like my amiable sister-in-law. She might have been in better business than poisoning my child's mind against me."

"Who else lives with you?" he asked, partly out of curiosity, but mainly to occupy the child's mind, so that she might not be fully conscious of the lapse of time.

"My brother Dan."

"How old is Dan?"

"I don't know. He is a good deal bigger than me."

"Do you like Dan?"

"Oh, yes; Dan is a nice boy. He buys me candy. He has gone to a party to-night."

"Has he?"

"And he won't be home till late. He told mamma so."

"I am glad of that," thought Hartley. "It is the better for my purpose."

"Dan is a smart boy. He earns lots of money."

"What does he do?"

"I don't know. He goes down town every morning, and he doesn't come home till supper time."

Hartley managed to continue his inquiries about Dan, but at last Althea became restless.

"Are we most there?" she asked.

"Yes, we are almost there."

"I don't see how mamma could have gone so far."

John Hartley looked out.

"I see how it is," he said. "The cab-driver lost the way, and that has delayed us."

This satisfied the child for a time. Meanwhile they reached the South Ferry, and Hartley began to consider in what way he could explain their crossing the water.

CHAPTER XXXII.

DONOVAN'S.

After a moment's thought Hartley took a flask from his pocket, into which he had dropped a sleeping potion, and offered it to the child.

"Drink, my dear," he said; "it will do you good."

It was a sweet wine and pleasant to the taste. Althea drank considerable.

"What is it? It tastes good," she said.

"It is a cordial," answered Hartley.

"I like it. I will ask mamma to get some. How long is it? Are we most there?"

"Almost."

"I feel very sleepy," said Althea, drowsily, the potion having already begun to attack her.

"Lean back and shut your eyes. I will tell you when we have arrived."

The innocent and unsuspecting child did as she was directed. Her little head nodded. She struggled against the increasing drowsiness, but in vain. In five minutes she was fast asleep.

"There will be no further trouble," thought Hartley. "When she wakes up it will be morning. My plan has been a complete success."

It might have been supposed that some instinct of parental affection would have made it disagreeable to this man to kidnap his own child by such means, but John Hartley had never been troubled with a heart or natural affections. He was supremely selfish, and surveyed the sleeping child as coolly and indifferently as if he had never before set eyes upon her.

Two miles and a half beyond the South Ferry, in a thinly settled outlying district of Brooklyn, stood a three-story brick house, shabby and neglected in appearance, bearing upon a sign over the door the name

DONOVAN'S

WINES AND LIQUORS.

It was the nightly resort of a set of rough and lawless men, many of them thieves and social outlaws, who drank and smoked as they sat at small tables in the sand-strewn bar-room.

Hugh Donovan himself had served a term at Sing Sing for burglary, and was suspected to be indirectly interested in the ventures of others engaged in similar offenses, though he managed to avoid arrest.

John Hartley ordered the hackman to stop. He sprang from the carriage, and unceremoniously entered the bar-room. Donovan, a short, thickset man with reddish whiskers, a beard of a week's growth, and but one serviceable eye, sat in a wooden arm-chair, smoking a clay pipe. There were two other men in the room, and a newsboy sat dozing on a settee.

Donovan looked up, and his face assumed a look of surprise as he met the glance of the visitor, whom he appeared to know.

"Where did you come from, Mr. Hartley?" he asked, taking the pipe from his mouth.

"Hist! Come out here," said Hartley.

Donovan obeyed directions.

"Is your wife at home, Hugh?" asked Hartley.

"Yes, Mr. Hartley. She's up stairs."

"I have a job for her and for you."

"What is it now?"

"I have a child in that carriage. I want her taken care of for a few days or weeks."

"Shure, the old woman isn't a very good protector for a gal. She's drunk half the time."

"I can't help it. There are reasons—imperative reasons—why the girl should be concealed for a time, and I can think of no other place than this."

"Who is the girl?"

"It is my own child."

Donovan whistled.

"I see you are surprised. I have little time for explanation, but I may tell you that she has been kept from me by my enemies, who wanted to get hold of her money."

"Has she got money?" asked Donovan, with curiosity.

"She will have, sometime. She is her mother's heiress."

"Did the old lady leave it all away from you, then? Shure, it's hard."

"Of course it is. The least I can expect is to be made guardian of my own child. But we are wasting time. Is there no way of getting up stairs except by passing through the bar-room?"

"Yes, Mr. Hartley, we can go up the back way. Just take the child and follow me."

Hartley did so. At the rear of the house was a stair-way, up which he clambered, bearing the sleeping child in his arms.

Donovan pushed the door open, and disclosed a dirty room, with his better-half—a tall, gaunt woman—reclining in a rocking-chair, evidently partially under the influence of liquor, as might be guessed from a black bottle on a wooden table near by.

She stared in astonishment at her husband's companions.

"Shure, Hugh, who is it you're bringin' here?"

"It's a child, old woman, that you're to have the care of."

"Divil a bit do I want a child to worrit me."

"You'll be well paid, Mrs. Donovan," said John Hartley.

"Will I get the money, or Hugh?" asked the Celtic lady.

"You shall have half, Bridget," said her husband.

"Will you shwar it?" asked the lady, cautiously.

"Yes, I'll swear it."

"And how much will it be?"

"I will pay ten dollars a week—half to you, and half to your husband," said Hartley. "Here's a week's pay in advance," and he took out two five-dollar bills, one of which was eagerly clutched by Mrs. Donovan.

"I'll take care of her," said she, readily. "What's her name?"

"Althea."

"Shure that's a quare name. I niver heard the like."

"You needn't call her that. You can call her any name you like," said Hartley, indifferently. "Perhaps you had better call her Katy, as there may

be a hue and cry after her, and that may divert suspicion."

"How old is the crathur?"

"Five or six—I forget which. Where shall I put her?"

"Put her in here," said Mrs. Donovan, and she opened the door of a small room, in which was a single untidy bed.

"She won't wake up till morning. I gave her a sleeping potion—otherwise she might have made a fuss, for she doesn't know me to be her father."

"Shure ye knew what to do."

"Now, Mrs. Donovan, I depend upon your keeping her safe. It will not do to let her escape, for she might find her way back to the people from whom I have taken her."

"I'll see to that, Mr. Hartley," said Donovan.

"Say nothing about me in connection with the matter, Donovan. I will communicate with you from time to time. If the police are put on the track, I depend on your sending her away to some other place of security."

"All right, sir."

"And now good-night. I shall go back to New York at once. I must leave you to pacify her as well as you can when she awakes. She is sure to make a fuss."

"I'll trate her like my own child," said Mrs. Donovan.

Had Hartley been a devoted father, this assurance from the coarse, red-faced woman would have been satisfactory, but he cared only for the child as a means of replenishing his pockets, and gave himself no trouble.

The hackman was still waiting at the door.

"It's a queer place to leave a child," thought he, as his experienced eye took in the features of the place. "It appears to be a liquor saloon. The gentleman can't be very particular. However, it is none of my business. I suppose it is all right."

"Driver, I am ready," said Hartley. "I'll go back with you."

"All right, sir."

"Go over Fulton Ferry, and leave me at your stand in Union Square."

The ride was a long one. Hartley threw himself back on the seat, and gave himself up to pleasant self-congratulation.

"I think this will bring Harriet Vernon to terms," he said. "She will find that she can't stand between me and my child. If she will make it worth my while, she shall have the child back, but I propose to see that my interests are secured."

The next morning Hartley stepped into an up-town

hotel, and wrote a letter to his sister-in-law in London, demanding that four thousand dollars be sent him yearly, in quarterly payments, in consideration of which he agreed to give up the child, and abstain from further molestation.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

ALTHEA BECOMES KATY DONOVAN.

The sleeping potion which had been administered to Althea kept her in sound sleep till eight o'clock the next morning. When her eyes opened, and she became conscious of her surroundings, she looked about her in surprise. Then she sat up in bed and gazed wildly at the torn wall paper and dirty and shabby furniture.

"Where am I?" she asked herself, in alarm. "Mamma, mamma!"

The door opened, and the red and inflamed face of Mrs. Hugh Donovan peered in.

"What is it yer want?" she asked.

"I want mamma," answered the child, still more frightened.

"Shure I'm your ma, child."

"No, you are not," said Althea. "I never saw you before."

"Didn't you, now? Maybe you've forgotten. I sent you away to board, but you've come home to live with your ma."

"You are telling stories. You are a bad woman," returned the child, ready to cry.

"It's a purty thing for a child to tell her ma she's lyin'."

"You're not my ma. You're an ugly woman. My ma hasn't got a red face."

"Hear till her now!" exclaimed Mrs. Donovan, indignantly. "Don't you go on talkin' that way, but get right up, or you sha'n't have any breakfast."

"Oh, send me back to my mother and Dan!" implored Althea.

"Dress yourself, and I'll see about it," said Mrs. Donovan.

Althea looked for her clothes, but could not find them. In their place she found a faded calico dress and some ragged undergarments, which had once belonged to a daughter of Mrs. Donovan, now at service.

"Those clothes are not mine," said Althea.

"Shure they are. What are yer talkin' about?"

"I had a pretty pink dress and a nice new skirt. Oh, where are they?"

"Shure you're dramin'. These was the clothes you took off last night," said Mrs. Donovan, with unblushing falsehood.

"I won't put this dress on," said the child, indignantly.

"Then you'll have to lay abed all day, and won't get nothing to eat," said the woman. "Maybe you'll like that now."

"What is your name?" asked Althea.

"Shure you're a quare child to ask your own mother's name. I'm Mrs. Donovan, and you're my Katy"

"I am not Katy. My name is Althea."

"That's a quare name intirely. Who put it into your head. I'm afraid you're gone crazy, Katy."

Althea was bewildered. Was it possible that she could be Katy Donovan, and that this red-faced woman was her mother? She began to doubt her own identity. She could not remember this woman, but was it possible that there was any connection between them?

"Are we in New York?" she asked, timidly.

"No, we are in Brooklyn."

"I used to live in New York with Mamma Mordaunt."

"Well, you're livin' in Brooklyn now with Mamma Donovan."

"I never saw you before."

"Shure I shouldn't have sent you away from me to have you come home and deny your own mother."

"Will you let me go to New York and see Mamma Mordaunt?" asked Althea, after a pause.

"If you're a good girl, perhaps I will. Now get up, and I'll give you some breakfast."

With a shudder of dislike Althea arrayed herself in the dirty garments of the real Katy Donovan, and looked at her image in the cracked mirror with a disgust which she could not repress.

Hartley had suggested that her own garments should be taken away in order to make her escape less feasible.

She opened the door, and entered the room in which Mrs. Donovan had set the table for breakfast.

As she came in at one door, Hugh Donovan entered at another.

"Come here, little gal," he said, with a grin.

Althea looked at him with real terror. Certainly Hugh Donovan was not a man to attract a child.

Althea at once thought of an ogre whom Dan had described to her in a fairy story, and half fancied that she was in the power of such a creature.

"I don't want to," said the child, trembling.

"Go to your father, Katy," said Mrs. Donovan. "He won't hurt you."

This her father! Althea shuddered at the idea, and she gazed as if fascinated at his one eye.

"Yes, come to your pa," said Donovan, jeeringly. "I like little gals—'specially when they're my own."

"I am not your child!" said Althea, alarmed.

"Yes, you be, and don't you deny it Come and give your father a kiss."

The little girl began to cry in nervous terror, and Donovan laughed, thinking it a good joke.

"Well, it'll do after breakfast," he said. "Sit up, child, and we'll see what the ould woman has got for us."

Mrs. Donovan did not excel as a cook, but Althea managed to eat a little bread and butter, for neither of which articles the lady of the house was responsible. When the meal was over she said :

"Now, will you take me back to New York?"

"You are not going back at all," said Hugh. "You are our little girl, and you are going to live with us."

Althea looked from one to the other in terror. Was it possible they could be in earnest? She was forced to believe it, and was overwhelmed at the prospect. She burst into a tempest of sobs.

Men are less tolerant of tears than women.

Hugh Donovan's face darkened, and his anger was kindled.

"Stop that howlin' now!" he said.

Althea continued to cry hysterically.

"Stop it now, if you know what's best for yourself!"

Althea was terrified, but she could not at once control her emotion.

"Old woman, get the whip!" said Hugh, hoarsely.

From a drawer Mrs. Donovan drew out a riding whip. Her husband took it, and brandished it menacingly.

"Do you see that, now?" he said.

"Yes," said Althea, trembling, stopping short, as if fascinated.

"Then you'll feel it if you don't stop your howlin'."

Althea gazed at him horror-stricken.

"I thought you'd come to your senses," he said, in a tone of satisfaction. "Kape her safe, old woman, till she knows how to behave."

In silent misery the little girl sat down and watched Mrs. Donovan as she cleared away the table, and washed the dishes. It was dull and hopeless work for her. She thought sorrowfully of Mrs. Mordaunt and Dan, and wished she could be with them again. Should she never, never see them? The thought so saddened her that she burst into a low moan, which at once drew the attention of Mrs. Donovan.

"Are you at it again?" she said.

"I can't help it," moaned Althea.

"Ye can't, can't ye? See here, now," and the woman displayed the whip with which her husband had threatened the child. "I'll give ye something to cry for."

"Oh, don't—don't beat me!" entreated Althea.

"Then kape quiet!"

"May I go out into the street?" asked the little girl.

"Ye want to run away," said Mrs. Donovan, suspiciously.

"No, I don't. I mean I won't unless you let me."

"I won't trust ye."

"Must I stay here all the time?" asked Althea, with her little heart sinking at the thought.

"No, Katy, you may go wid me when I go to the market," answered Mrs. Donovan. "Shure, if you'll be a good gal, I'll give you all the pleasure I can."

Althea waited half an hour, and then was provided with a ragged sun-bonnet, with which, concealing her sad face, she emerged from the house, and walked to a small market, where Mrs. Donovan obtained her supplies for dinner.

Troubled as she was, Althea looked about her with a child's curiosity on her way through the strange streets. It served to divert her from her sorrow.

"Who's that little girl, Mrs. Donovan?" asked an acquaintance.

"Shure it's my little Katy," said the woman, with a significant wink which prevented further questioning.

Althea wished to deny this, but she did not dare to. She had become afraid of her new guardians. Oh, if

she could only see Dan! She felt sure that he would take her away from these wicked people, but how was Dan to know where she was. The poor child's lips quivered, and she could hardly refrain from crying.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

ANOTHER LITTLE GAME.

It was so late when Dan heard of Althea's disappearance that he felt it necessary to wait till morning before taking any steps toward her recovery.

"I'll find her, mother," he said, confidently. "Do not lie awake thinking of her, for it won't do any good."

"How can I help it, Dan? I didn't know how much I loved the dear child till I lost her."

"You have not lost her, mother."

"I am not so hopeful as you, Dan. I fear that I shall never see her again."

"I am sure we shall. Now, mother, I am going to bed, but I shall be up bright and early in the morning, and then to work."

"You won't have any time, Dan. You must go to the store."

"I shall take a week's vacation. I will write a note to Mr. Rogers, telling him my reasons, and he will be sure not to object. If Althea is to be found, I will find her within a week."

Dan's confidence gave Mrs. Mordaunt some courage, but she could not feel as sanguine of success as Dan.

In the morning Dan sought out Nancy, and took down her account of how the little girl had been spirited away.

"So she went away in a carriage, Nancy?"

"Yes, Master Dan."

"Can you tell me what sort of a looking man it was that took her away?"

"Shure I couldn't. I was struck dumb, you see, wid hearing how your mother broke her leg, and I didn't think to look at him sharp."

"You can tell if he was an old man or a young one."

"He was naythur. He was betwixt and betwane."

"Very tall or very short?"

"Naythur. He was jist middlin'."

"Well, that's something. Now, what kind of a carriage was it?"

"Jist a hack like them at the square."

"You wouldn't remember the driver?"

"No; shure they all look alike to me."

Dan made more inquiries, but elicited nothing further that was likely to be of service to him.

After a little reflection he decided to go to Union

square and interview some of the drivers waiting for passengers there.

He did so, but the driver who had actually been employed by Hartley was absent, and he learned nothing. One driver, however, remembered carrying a gentleman and child to a house on Twenty-seventh street, between Eighth and Ninth avenues.

Dan thought the clew of sufficient importance to be followed up. His courage rose when, on inquiring at the house mentioned, he learned that a child had actually been brought there.

"May I see the child, madam?" he asked.

"If you like," answered the lady, in surprise.

She appeared in a short time with a boy of about Althea's age.

Dan's countenance fell.

"It is a little girl I am inquiring after," he said.

"Then why didn't you say so?" demanded the woman, sharply. "You would have saved me some trouble."

"I beg your pardon, madam."

"I begin to think I am not as good a detective as I thought," said Dan to himself. "I am on a false scent, that is sure."

So Dan returned to Union Square.

When he had been asking questions of the cab-drivers he had not been unobserved. John Hartley,

who knew Dan by sight, laughed in his sleeve as he noted our hero's inquiries.

"You may be a smart boy, my lad," he said to himself, "but I don't think you'll find the child. I have a great mind to give you a hint."

He approached Dan, and observed, in a friendly way:

"Are you in search of your little sister?"

"Yes, sir," returned Dan, eagerly. "Can you tell me anything about her?"

"I am not sure, but possibly I may. I occupy a room directly opposite the house in which you board.'

"Did you see Althea carried away?" asked Dan, eagerly.

"Yes; I was sitting at my window when I saw a hack stop at your door. The door-bell was rung by a man who desended from the hack, and shortly afterward your sister came out, and was put into the carriage."

"What was the man's appearance, sir? The servant could not tell me."

"So much the better," thought Hartley, with satisfaction.

"He was a little taller than myself, I should say," he answered, "and I believe his hair was brown"—Hartley's was black. "I am sorry I can't remember more particularly."

"That is something. Thank you, sir. I wish I knew where the cab went."

"I think I can tell you that. I came down into the street before the cab drove away, and I heard the gentleman referred to say, in a low voice, 'Drive to Harlem.'"

"Thank you, sir," said Dan, gratefully. "That puts me on the right track. I shall know where to search now."

"I wish I could tell you more," said Hartley, with a queer smile.

"Thank you, sir."

"If you find your little sister, I should be glad if you would let me know," continued Hartley, chuckling inwardly.

"I will, sir, if you will let me know your name and address."

"My name is John Franklin, and I live in the house directly opposite yours, No. —."

"All right, sir; I will note it down."

John Hartley looked after Dan with a smile.

"My dear young friend," he said to himself, "it goes to my heart to deceive you, you are so innocent and confiding. I wish you much joy of your search in Harlem. I think it will be some time before I receive intelligence of your success. Still I will keep my room here, and look after you a little. I am really

afraid your business will suffer while you are wandering about."

John Hartley had already written to London, and he was prepared to wait three weeks or more for an answer to his proposition. Meanwhile he had one source of uneasiness. His funds were getting low, and unless Harriet Vernon responded favorably to his proposal, he was liable to be seriously embarrassed. He had on previous similar occasions had recourse to the gaming-table, but Fortune did not always decide in his favor. He did not dare to hazard the small sum he had on hand, lest want of success should imperil the bold scheme for obtaining an income at his child's expense.

At this critical point in his fortunes he fell in with a Western adventurer, who, by a sort of freemasonry, recognizing Hartley's want of character, cautiously sounded him as to becoming a partner in a hazardous but probably profitable enterprise. It was to procure some genuine certificates of stock in a Western railway for a small number of shares, say five or ten, and raise them ingeniously to fifty and a hundred, and then pledge them as collateral in Wall street for a corresponding sum of money.

John Hartley, if an honest man, would have indignantly declined the overtures; but he was not endowed with Roman virtue. He made a cautious

investigation to ascertain how great was the danger of detection, and how well the enterprise would pay. The answer to the second question was so satisfactory that he made up his mind to run the necessary risk. Blake and he came to a definite understanding, and matters were put in train. Certificates were readily obtained, and by the help of a skillful accomplice, who did the work for a specified sum, were ingeniously raised tenfold.

Then Blake, assuming the dress and manners of a thriving business man from Syracuse, negotiated a loan, pledging the raised certificate as collateral. The private banker put it away among his securities without a doubt or suspicion, and Blake and Hartley divided a thousand dollars between them.

John Hartley was very much elated by his success. The pecuniary assistance came just in the nick of time, when his purse was very low.

"It's a good thing to have more than one string to your bow," he thought. "Not but that my little game in getting hold of the child is likely to pay well. Harriet Vernon will find that I have the whip-hand of her. She must come to my terms, sooner or later."

At that very moment Harriet Vernon was embarking at Liverpool on a Cunard steamer. She had received the letter of her brother-in-law, and decided to answer it in person.

CHAPTER XXXV.

DAN DISGUISES HIMSELF.

For several days Dan strolled about Harlem, using his eyes to good advantage. As a pretext he carried with him a few morning papers for sale. Armed with these he entered shops and saloons without exciting surprise or suspicion. But he discovered not a trace of the lost girl.

One day, as he was riding home in the Third avenue cars, there flashed upon his mind a conviction that he was on a wrong scent.

"Is it probable that the man who carried away Althea would give the right direction so that it could be overheard by a third party? No; it was probably meant as a blind, and I have been just fool enough to fall into the trap."

So Dan's eyes were partially opened.

Before the day was over they were wholly opened. He met John Hartley on Broadway toward the close of the afternoon.

"Well, have you heard anything of your sister?" he asked, with an appearance of interest.

"Not yet," answered Dan.

"That's a pity. Do you go up to Harlem every day?"

"Yes."

"Keep on, you will find her in time."

After they parted, Dan, happening to look back, detected a mocking glance in the face of his questioner, and a new discovery flashed upon him. Hartley was making a fool of him. He had sent him to Harlem, purposely misleading him.

"What can be his object?" thought Dan. "Can he have had anything to do with the abduction of Althea?"

This was a question which he could not satisfactorily answer, but he resolved to watch Hartley, and follow him wherever he went, in the hope of obtaining some clew. Of course he must assume some disguise, as Hartley must not recognize him.

Finally Dan decided upon this plan.

He hired a room on East Fourth street for a week, and then sought an Italian boy to whom he had occasionally given a few pennies, and with some difficulty (for Giovanni knew but little English, and he no Italian) proposed that the Italian should teach him to sing and play "Viva Garibaldi." Dan could play a little on the violin, and soon qualified himself for his new business.

At a second-hand shop on Chatham street he picked up a suit of tattered velvet, obtained a liquid with which to stain his skin to a dark brown, and then started out as an Italian street musician. His masquerade suit he kept in his room at East Fourth street, changing therefrom his street dress morning and evening. When in full masquerade he for the first time sang and played, Giovanni clapped his hands with delight.

"Will I do, Giovanni?" asked Dan.

"Yes, you do very well. You look like my brother,"

"All right."

Giovanni was puzzled to understand why Dan took so much pains to enter upon a hard and unprofitable profession, but Dan did not enlighten him as to his motive.

He thought it most prudent to keep his secret, even from his mother. One day he met her on the sidewalk, and began to sing "Viva Garibaldi."

Mrs. Mordaunt listened without a suspicion that it was her own son, and gave him two pennies, which he acknowledged by a low bow, and "Grazia, signora."

"Poor boy! Do you earn much money?" she asked.

"I no understand English," said Dan.

"I hope his padrone does not beat him," said Mrs.

Mordaunt to herself. "I hear these poor boys are much abused. I wonder if I can make him understand? Have you a padrone?" she asked.

"Si, signora, padrone," answered Dan.

"Does he beat you?"

"I no understand."

"It is no use; he doesn't understand English. Here is some more money for you," and she handed him a five-cent coin.

"It's a wise mother that knows her own child," thought Dan. "Hallo! there's Hartley. I'll follow him."

Hartley boarded a University Place car, and Dan jumped on also.

"I wonder where he's going?" thought our hero.

Italian boys so seldom ride that the conductor eyed Dan with some suspicion.

"Five cents," he demanded.

Dan produced the money.

"I thought you might be expecting to ride for nothing," said the conductor. "Seems to me you're flush for an Italian fiddler."

"No understand English," said Dan.

"And I don't understand your lingo."

A charitable lady inside the car chanced to see Dan, and it occurred to her that she would do him a service.

"Can you sing, my boy?" she asked.

"I sing a little," answered Dan.

"If the conductor doesn't object, you may sing while we are on our way. Here's ten cents for you."

Dan bowed and took the money.

"You can sing and play," said the conductor, good-naturedly.

Dan was not at all desirous of doing this, for Hartley sat only three feet from him, and he feared he might recognize him, but it would not be in character to refuse, so he began, and sang his one air, playing an accompaniment. Several of the passengers handed him small coins, among them Hartley.

"How well he sings!" said the charitable lady.

"I can't agree with you, ma'am," said Hartley. "I would rather give him money to stop."

"His voice strikes me as very rich, and the Italian is such a beautiful language."

Hartley shrugged his shoulders.

"I have heard a good deal better performers even among the street boys," said Hartley.

"So have I," said Dan to himself. "He doesn't suspect me; I am glad of that."

Hartley remained in the car till it reached the Astor House, and so, of course, did Dan. In fact, Hartley was on his way to Brooklyn to pay another installment

to the guardians of the little girl whom he had carried off. Dan, therefore, was in luck.

Hartley kept on his way to Fulton Ferry, Dan following at a prudent distance.

Had Hartley looked back, he would have suspected nothing, for he had not penetrated Dan's disguise, and would therefore have been quite at a loss to understand any connection between the street musician and himself.

They both boarded the same ferry-boat, and landed in Brooklyn together.

At this moment Hartley turned round, and his glance fell upon Dan.

"Hallo! you here?" he said, with surprise.

"Si, signor," answered Dan, bowing deferentially.

"What brings you to Brooklyn?"

"I sing, I play," said our hero.

"And you do both abominably."

"I no understand English," said Dan.

"It is lucky you don't, or you might not like my compliment."

"Shall I sing 'Viva Garibaldi?'" asked our hero, innocently.

"No—good heavens, no! I've had enough of your squeaking. Here, take this money, and don't sing."

"Si, signor," answered Dan, assuming a look of bewilderment.

Hartley prepared to board a car, which was not yet ready to start. Dan rapidly decided that it would not do for him to follow Hartley any farther. It would certainly arouse his suspicions. But must he abandon the pursuit? That would not do either. Looking about him, his eye fell on a bright-looking newsboy of about twelve.

"Do you want to make some money, Johnny?" he asked.

The boy surveyed him with astonishment.

"Did you speak to me, Garibaldi?" he asked, jocosely.

"Yes, but I am no Italian," said Dan, rapidly. "I am on the track of that man, but he suspects me. I will give you a dollar if you will jump on the car and find out where he goes."

"Where's the dollar?" asked the boy, cautiously.

"Here. Pay your expenses out of it, and I will pay you back when you report to me."

"Where will I find you?"

"Here. I will stay till you come back."

"It's a bargain."

"Hurry; the car is starting."

The newsboy ran, jumped on the car, and it moved on.

"It is the best thing I could do," thought Dan. "I hope the boy is sharp, and won't lose sight of him. I

feel sure that he had something to do with carrying off poor little Althea."

For two hours Dan lingered near the ferry, playing occasionally by way of filling up the time. It seemed to be a good location, for he received from fifty to sixty cents from passers-by.

"When hard times come," thought Dan, "I shall know what to do. I will become an Italian street singer."

After two hours the newsboy jumped off an incoming car, and approached Dan.

"Did you find out where he went?" asked Dan, eagerly.

"Yes," answered the boy.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

DAN MAKES A DISCOVERY.

Dan's eyes sparkled with joy at the success of his plan.

"Now tell me," he said, drawing the newsboy aside to a place where they would not be overheard.

"First give me my car fare."

"All right. Here's a quarter. Never mind the change."

"You've made a fortun' by fiddling, you have," said the newsboy, in surprise.

"I am not a fiddler. I am a detective."

"The newsboy whistled.

"You're a young one."

"Never mind that. Go ahead with your story."

The newsboy described his following Hartley to Donovan's.

Hartley went in, and he directly afterward.

"What sort of a place is it?" asked Dan.

"It's a saloon."

"Perhaps he only went in for a drink," suggested Dan, uneasily.

"No, he didn't call for nothing to drink. I saw him take out some money and give to the man and the woman."

"What man and what woman?"

"They was the Donovans."

"How long did you stay?"

"Ten minutes. I axed old Donovan to buy a paper, and he wouldn't. Then I sat down for a minute, makin' believe I was tired. They looked at me, but I didn't appear to be noticin' 'em, and they let me stay."

"Did you see anything of a little girl?" asked Dan, eagerly.

"Yes, there was a little gal came in. The woman called her Katy."

Dan's spirits sank. It was Mrs. Donovan's daughter he feared, not the child he was seeking.

"How did she look? How old was she?"

"About fixe or six years old."

He added a description of the little girl which quite revived Dan's hopes, for it answered in every respect to Althea.

"Did you hear the little girl say anything?"

"Yes, she told her mother she wanted to see Dan."

Dan's eyes glistened. It was Althea, after all.

"It's all right," he said. "You needn't tell me any more. You're a trump."

"Have you found out what you want to know?"

"Yes. Have you anything to do for the next two hours?"

"No."

"Then I'll pay you another dollar to go to the place with me. I think I could find it myself, but I can't take any chances. And don't say a word about what you have seen."

"I won't. Is this little gal your sister?"

"She is my adopted sister, and she has been stolen from us."

"Then I'd be willing to help you for nothing. I've got a little sister about her size. If anybody stole her, I'd mash him!"

"Come along, then."

The two boys boarded a car, and in forty minutes got out.

"That's the place," said the newsboy, pointing out Donovan's, only a few rods away.

"All right. You'd better leave me now, or you may be remembered, and that would lead them to suspect me. Here's your money, and thank you."

"I hope you'll find your sister."

"Thank you. If I do, it'll be through your help."

Dan did not at once enter Donovan's. He stopped in the street, and began to sing "Viva Garibaldi."

Two or three boys gathered about him, and finally a

couple of men. One of them handed him a three-cent piece.

"Grazio, signor," said Dan, pulling off his hat.

"What part of Italy do you come from?" asked one of the men.

"Si, signor, I come from Italy," answered Dan, not considering it prudent to understand too well.

"Oh, he don't understand you. Come along."

"His hair doesn't look like that of most Italians."

"Pooh! I'd know him for an Italian boy anywhere."

At this moment the door of the saloon opened, and Dan, putting his violin under his arm, entered.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

DAN IS DISCOVERED.

Donovan had two customers. One was an Irishman, the other a German. Both had evidently drank more than was good for them. Dan looked in vain for Althea. Mrs. Donovan had taken her up stairs.

"Well, boy, what do you want?" asked Donovan, rather roughly.

"Will you have yer musique?" asked Dan, uncertain whether he was talking as an Italian boy might be expected to.

"No; I don't want to hear any fiddle-scraping."

"Shure, let him play a little, Mister Donovan," said the Irishman.

"Just as you like," said Donovan, carelessly, "only I have no money for him."

"Faith, thin, I have. Here boy, play something."

Dan struck up his one tune—Viva Garibaldi—but the Irishman did not seem to care for that.

"Oh, bother ould Garibaldi!" he said. "Can't you play something else?"

"I wish I could," thought Dan. "Suppose I compose something."

Accordingly he tried to play an air popular enough at the time, but made bad work of it.

"Stop him! stop him!" exclaimed the German, who had a better musical ear than the Irishman. "Here, lend me your fiddle, boy."

He took the violin, and in spite of his inebriety, managed to play a German air upon it.

"Shure you bate the boy at his own trade," said the Irishman. "You must be dhry What'll you have now?"

The German indicated his preference, and the Irishman called for whisky.

"What'll you have, Johnny?" he asked, addressing Dan.

"I no drink," answered our hero, shaking his head.

"Shure you're an Italian wonder, and it's Barnum ought to hire you."

"I no understand English," said Dan.

"Then you're a haythen," said Pat Moriarty.

He gulped down the whisky, and finding it more convenient to sit than to stand, fell back upon a settee.

"I wish Althea would come in," thought Dan.

At that moment a heavy fall was heard in the room overhead, and a child's shrill scream directly afterward.

"Something's happened to my wife," muttered Donovan. "She's drunk again."

He hurried up stairs, and the German followed. This gave Dan an excuse for running up, too.

Mrs. Donovan had been drinking more copiously than usual. While in this condition she imprudently got upon a chair to reach a pitcher from an upper shelf. Her footing was uncertain, and she fell over, pitcher in hand, the chair sharing in the downfall.

When her husband entered the room she was lying flat on her back, grasping the handle of the pitcher, her eyes closed, and her breathing stertorious. Althea, alarmed, stood over her, crying and screaming.

"The old woman's taken too much," said Donovan. "Get up, you divil!" he shouted, leaning over his matrimonial partner. "Ain't you ashamed of yourself, now?"

Mrs. Donovan opened her eyes, and stared at him vacantly.

"Where am I?" she inquired.

"On your back, you old fool, where you deserve to be."

"It's the whisky," murmured the fallen lady.

"Of course it is. Why can't you drink dacent like me? Shure it's a purty example you're settin' to the child. Ain't you ashamed to lie here in a hape before them gintlemen?"

This called Althea's attention to the German and

"Oh, Dan! Have you come to take me away?" Althea exclaimed.
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Dan. In spite of Dan's disguise, she recognized him with a cry of joy.

"Oh, Dan! have you come to take me away?" she exclaimed, dashing past Donovan, and clasping her arms round the supposed Italian.

"Hillo! what's up?" exclaimed Donovan, looking at the two in surprise.

"Oh, it's my brother Dan," exclaimed Althea. "You'll take me away, won't you, Dan? How funny you look! Where did you get your fiddle?"

"So that's your game, my young chicken, is it?" demanded Donovan, seizing our hero roughly by the shoulder. Then pulling off Dan's hat, he added: "You're no more Italian than I am."

Dan saw that it would be useless to keep up the deceit any longer. He looked Donovan full in the face, and said, firmly:

"You are right, Mr. Donovan. I have come here for my sister."

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

UNPLEASANT QUARTERS.

Donovan's red face turned fairly purple with rage.

"Well, I'll be blowed!" he said, adding an oath or two. "You're a bold little pup! You dare to insult me! Why, I could crush you with my little finger."

"I have not insulted you," said Dan. "I have only come for my sister."

"I don't know anything about your sister. So you can go about your business."

"That little girl is my adopted sister," said Dan, pointing to Althea. "Ask her if she doesn't know me."

"That is my daughter, Katy Donovan," said the saloon keeper.

"No, I am not," said Althea, beginning to cry. "I want to go away with my brother Dan."

"Shut up, you little jade!" said Donovan, roughly. "Mrs. Donovan," (by this time she was on her feet, looking on in a dazed sort of way), "is not this our little Katy?"

"Shure it is," she answered.

"You see, young man, you're mistaken. You can leave," and Donovan waved his hand triumphantly.

"That's too thin, Mrs. Donovan!" said Dan, provoked. "That don't go down. I can bring plenty of proof that Althea was until a week since living with my mother."

"That for your proof!" said Donovan, contemptuously snapping his fingers.

"I know who stole her, and who brought her to this house," continued Dan.

Donovan started. The boy knew more than he had expected.

"The same man has been here to-day," added Dan.

"You lie!" retorted Donovan, but he looked uneasy.

"You know that I tell the truth. How much does he pay you for taking care of the girl?"

"Enough of this!" roared the saloon keeper. "I can't waste my time talkin' wid you. Will you clear out now?"

"No, I won't, unless Althea goes with me," said Dan, firmly.

"You won't, then! We'll see about that," and Donovan, making a rush, seized Dan in his arms, and carried him down stairs, despite our hero's resistance.

"I'll tache you to come here insultin' your betters!" he exclaimed.

Dan struggled to get away, but though a strong boy, he was not a match for a powerful man, and could not effect his deliverance. The Irishman already referred to was still upon the settee.

"What's up, Donovan?" he asked, as the saloon-keeper appeared with his burden. "What's the lad been doin'?"

"What's he been doin', is it? He's been insultin' me to my face—that's what the Donovans won't stand. Open the trap-door, Barney."

"What for?"

"Don't trouble me wid your questions, but do as I tell you. You shall know afterward."

Not quite willingly, but reluctant to offend Donovan, who gave him credit for the drinks, Barney raised a trap-door leading to the cellar below.

There was a ladder for the convenience of those wishing to ascend and descend, but Donovan was not disposed to use much ceremony with the boy who had offended him. He dropped him through the opening, Dan by good luck falling on his feet.

"That's the best place for you, you young meddler!" he said. "You'll find it mighty comfortable, and I wish you much joy. I won't charge you no rint, and that's an object in these hard times—eh, Barney?"

"To be sure it is," said Barney; "but all the same,

Donovan, I'd rather pay rint up stairs, if I had my choice!"

"He hasn't the choice," said Donovan triumphantly. "Good-by to you!" and he let the trap fall.

"What's it all about now, Donovan?" asked Barney.

"He wanted to shtale my Katy," said Donovan.

"What, right before your face?" asked Barney, puzzled.

"Yes, shure! What'll you take to drink?" asked Donovan, not caring to go into particulars.

Barney indicated his choice with alacrity, and, after drinking, was hardly in a condition to pursue his inquiries.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

DAN DISCOMFITS THE DONOVANS.

Dan found himself at first bewildered and confused by his sudden descent into the cellar. As his eyes became accustomed to the darkness, he was able to get an idea of his surroundings. It was a common cellar with an earthen floor. Ranged along one side was a row of kegs, some containing whisky, others empty. Besides, there were a few boxes, and odds and ends which had been placed here to get them out of the way.

"Not a very cheerful-looking place," thought Dan, "though I do get it rent free."

He sat down on a box, and began to consider his position. Was there any way of escape? The walls were solid, and although there was a narrow window, consisting of a row of single panes, it was at the top of the cellar, and not easily accessible. He might indeed reach it by the ladder, but he would have to break the glass and crawl through, a mode of escape likely to be attended by personal risk.

"No, that won't do," thought Dan. "At any rate, I won't try it till other things fail."

Meanwhile Donovan, in the bar-room above, was in high good humor. He felt that he had done a sharp thing, and more than once chuckled as he thought of his prisoner below. Indeed he could not forbear, after about half an hour, lifting the trap and calling down stairs:

"Hallo, there!"

"Hallo!" said Dan, coolly.

"What are you doin'?"

"Sitting on a box."

"How do you like it?" chuckled Donovan.

"Come down and see."

"You're an impudent jackanapes!" retorted Donovan, wrathfully. "You'll get enough of it before you're through."

"So will you," answered Dan, boldly.

"I'll take the risk," chuckled Donovan. "Do you know what you remind me of."

"Suppose you tell me."

"You're like a rat in a trap."

"Not exactly," answered Dan, as a bright thought dawned upon him.

"Why not?"

"Because a rat can do no harm, and I can."

It occurred to Donovan that Dan might have some matches in his pocket, and was momentarily alarmed

at the thought that our hero might set the house on fire.

"Have you matches with you?" he asked.

"No," answered Dan.

"If you had," said the saloon-keeper, relieved, "it would do you no good to set a fire. You would only burn yourself up."

"I don't mean to set the house on fire," said Dan, composedly.

"Then you may do your worst. You can't scare me."

"Can't I?" returned Dan, rising from his seat on the box.

"What are you going to do?" asked Donovan, following with his glance the boy's motion.

"I'll tell you," said Dan. "I'm going to take the spigot out of them whisky-kegs, and let the whisky run out on the floor."

"Don't you do it!" exclaimed the saloon-keeper, now thoroughly frightened.

"Then let me up."

"I won't."

"All right. You must take the consequences."

As he spoke Dan dextrously pulled the spigot from a keg, and Donovan, to his dismay, heard the precious liquid—precious in his eyes—pouring out upon the floor.

With an exertion he raised the trap-door, hastily descended the ladder, and rushed to the keg to replace the spigot.

Meanwhile Dan ran up the ladder, pulled it after him, and made his late jailer a captive.

"Put down the ladder, you young rascal!" roared Donovan, when, turning from his work, he saw how the tables had been turned.

"It wouldn't be convenient just yet," answered Dan, coolly.

He shut the trap-door, hastily lugged the ladder to the rear of the house (unobserved, for there were no customers present), then dashed up stairs and beckoned to Althea to follow him. There was no obstacle, for Mrs. Donovan was stupefied by liquor.

Putting on her things, the little girl hastily and gladly obeyed.

As they passed through the saloon, Donovan's execrations and shouts were heard proceeding from the cellar.

"What's that, Dan?" asked Althea, trembling.

"Never you mind, Althea," said Dan. "I'll tell you later."

The two children hurried to the nearest horse-car, which luckily came up at the moment, and jumped on board.

Dan looked back with a smile at the saloon, saying to himself:

"I rather think, Mr. Donovan, you've found your match this time. I hope you'll enjoy the cellar as much as I did."

In about an hour and a half Dan, holding Althea by the hand, triumphantly led her into his mother's presence.

"I've brought her back, mother," he said.

"Oh, my dear, dear little girl!" exclaimed Mrs. Mordaunt, joyfully. "I thought I should never, never see you again. How did you find her, Dan?"

But we will not wait to hear a twice-told tale. Rather let us return to Donovan, where the unhappy proprietor is still a captive in his own cellar. Here he remained till his cries attracted the attention of a wondering customer, who finally lifted the trap-door.

"What are you doin' down there?" he asked, amazed.

"Put down the ladder and let me up first of all."

"I don't see any ladder."

"Look round, then. I suppose the cursed boy has hidden it."

It was a considerable time before the ladder was

found. Then the saloon-keeper emerged from his prison in a very bad humor.

"How did you get shut up there?" asked his liberator.

"What business is it of yours?" demanded Donovan, irritably."

"I wish I had left you there," said the customer, with justifiable indignation. "This is your gratitude for my trouble, is it?"

"Excuse me, but I'm so mad with that cursed boy. What'll you take? It's my treat."

"Come, that's talking," said the placated customer. "What boy do you mean?"

"Wait a minute," said Donovan, a sudden fear possessing him.

He rushed up stairs and looked for Althea.

His wife was lying on the floor, breathing heavily, but the little girl was gone.

"The boy's got her! What a cursed fool I have been!" exclaimed Donovan, sinking into a chair.

Then, in a blind fury with the wife who didn't prevent the little girl's recapture, he seized a pail of water and emptied it over the face of the prostrate woman.

Mrs. Donovan came to, and berated her husband furiously.

"Serves you right, you jade!" said the affectionate husband.

He went down stairs feeling better. He had had revenge on somebody.

It was certainly an unlucky day for the Donovans.

CHAPTER XL.

HARTLEY SURPRISED.

After calling at Donovan's, on the day when Dan recovered Althea, John Hartley crossed the Courtlandt street ferry, and took a train to Philadelphia with Blake, his accomplice in the forged certificates. The two confederates had raised some Pennsylvania railway certificates, which they proposed to put on the Philadelphia market.

They spent several days in the Quaker City, and thus Hartley heard nothing of the child's escape.

Donovan did nor see fit to inform him, as this would stop the weekly remittance for the child's board, and, moreover, draw Hartley's indignation down upon his head.

One day, in a copy of the *New York Herald*, which he purchased at the news-stand in the Continental Hotel, Hartley observed the arrival of Harriet Vernon at the Fifth Avenue Hotel.

"I thought she would come," he said to himself, with a smile "I have her in my power at last. She must submit to my terms, or lose sight of the child altogether."

"Blake," he said, aloud, "I must take the first train to New York."

"Why, what's up, partner?" asked Blake, in surprise. "Anything gone wrong?"

"On the contrary, I see a chance of making a good haul."

"How?"

"Not in our line. It's some private business of my own."

"All right. I wish you success. When will you return?"

"That I can't exactly say. I will write or telegraph you."

In the evening of the same day Mrs. Vernon sat in her room at the Fifth Avenue Hotel. A servant brought up a card bearing the name of John Hartley.

"He is prompt," she said to herself, with a smile. "Probably he has not heard of Althea's escape from the den to which he carried her. I will humor him, in that case, and draw him out."

"I will see the gentleman in the parlor," she said.

Five minutes later she entered the ladies' parlor. Hartley rose to receive her with a smile of conscious power, which told Harriet Vernon that he was ignorant of the miscarriage of his plans.

"I heard of your *unexpected* arrival, Mrs. Ver-

non," he commenced, "and have called to pay my respects."

"Your motive is appreciated, John Hartley," she said, coldly. "I expected to see you."

"That's pleasant," he said, mockingly. "May I beg to apologize for constraining you to cross the Atlantic?"

"Don't apologize; you have merely acted out your nature."

"Probably that is not meant to be complimentary. However, it can't be helped."

"I suppose you have something to say to me, John Hartley," said Mrs. Vernon, seating herself. "Pray proceed."

"You are quite right. I wrote you that I had ferreted out your cunningly devised place of concealment for my daughter."

"You did."

He looked at her a little puzzled. She seemed very cool and composed, whereas he expected she would be angry and disturbed.

"We may as well come to business at once," he said. "If you wish to recover the charge of your ward, you must accede to my terms."

"State them."

"They are expressed in my letter to you. You

must agree to pay me a thousand dollars each quarter."

"It strikes me you are exorbitant in your demands."

"I don't think so. At any rate, the money won't come out of you. It will come from my daughter's income."

"So you would rob your daughter, John Hartley?"

"Rob my daughter!" he exclaimed, angrily. "She will have enough left. Is she to live in luxury, and with thousands to spare, while I, her only living parent, wander penniless and homeless about the world."

"I might sympathize with you, if I did not know how you have misused the gifts of fortune, and embittered the existence of my poor sister. As it is, it only disgusts me."

"I don't want you sympathy, Harriet Vernon," he said, roughly. "I want four thousand dollars a year."

"Suppose I decline to let you have it?"

"Then you must take the consequences," he said, quickly.

"What are to be the consequences?" she asked, quietly.

"That you and Althea will be forever separated. She shall never see you again."

He looked at her intently to see the effect of his threat.

Harriet Vernon was as cool and imperturbable as ever.

"Have you been in New York for a week past?' she asked, as he thought, irrelevantly.

"Why do you ask?"

"I have a reason."

"No, I have not."

"So I thought."

"Why did you think so?"

"Because you don't appear to know what has happened."

"What has happened?" he asked, uneasily.

"Mr. Donovan can tell you. As for me, I bid you good-evening."

A wild fear took possession of him.

"What do you mean?" he demanded, hurriedly.

"I mean, John Hartley, that you are not as shrewd as you imagine. I mean that a boy has foiled you; and while you were doubtless laughing at his simplicity, he has proved more than a match for you. You have no claim upon me, and I must decline your disinterested proposal."

She left the room, leaving him crest-fallen and stupefied.

"Has Donovan betrayed me?" he muttered. will soon find out."

He started for Brooklyn immediately, and t.ward eleven o'clock entered the saloon at Donovan's.

"Where is the child?" he demanded, sternly.

The rubicund host turned pale.

"She's gone," he cried, "but I couldn't h.lp it, Mr. Hartley. On my honor, I couldn't."

"How did it happen? Tell me at once."

The story was told, Donovan ending by i voking curses upon the boy who had played such a trick upon him.

"You're a fool!" said Hartley, roughly. "I am ashamed of you, for allowing a boy to get the best of you."

"That boy's a fox," said Donovan. "He's a match for the old one, he is. I'd like to break his neck for him."

"It's not too late. I may get hold of the girl again," mused Hartley, as he rose to go. "If I do, I won't put her in charge of such a dunderhead."

He left Donovan's and returned to New York, but he had hardly left the Fulton ferry-boat when he was tapped on the shoulder by an officer.

"I want you, ' he said.

"What for?" asked Hartley, nervously.

"A little financial irregularity, as they call it in Wall street. You may know something about some raised railroad certificates!"

"Confusion!" muttered Hartley. "Luck is dead against me."

CHAPTER XLI.

DAN IS ADOPTED.

The morning papers contained an account of John Hartley's arrest, and the crime with which he was charged.

Harriet Vernon read it at the breakfast-table with an interest which may be imagined.

"I don't like to rejoice in any man's misfortune," she said to herself, "but now I can have a few years of peace. My precious brother-in-law will doubtless pass the next few years in enforced seclusion, and I can have a settled home."

Directly after breakfast, she set out for the humble home of her niece. She found all at home, for Dan was not to go back to business till Monday.

"Well, my good friend," she said, "I have news for you."

"Good news, I hope," said Dan.

"Yes, good news. Henceforth I can have Althea with me. The obstacle that separated us is removed."

Mrs. Mordaunt's countenance fell, and Dan looked

sober. It was plain that Althea was to be taken from them, and they had learned to love her.

"I am very glad," faltered Mrs. Mordaunt.

"You don't look glad," returned Mrs. Vernon.

"You see we don't like to part with Althea," explained Dan, who understood his mother's feelings.

"Who said you were to part with the child?" asked Mrs. Vernon, bluntly.

"I thought you meant to take her from us."

"Oh, I see. Your mistake is a natural one, for I have not told you my plans. I mean to take a house up town, install Mrs. Mordaunt as my housekeeper and friend, and adopt this young man (indicating Dan), provided he has no objection."

"How kind you are, Mrs. Vernon," ejaculated Mrs. Mordaunt.

"No, I am selfish. I have plenty of money, and no one to care for, or to care for me. I have taken a fancy to you all, and I am quite sure that we can all live happily together. Althea is my niece, and you, Dan, may call me aunt, too, if you like. Is it a bargain?"

Dan offered her his hand in a frank, cordial way, which she liked.

"So it is settled, then," she said, in a pleased voice. "I ought to warn you," she added, "that I have the

reputation of being ill-tempered. You may get tired of living with me."

"We'll take the risk," said Dan, smiling.

Mrs. Vernon, whose habit it was to act promptly, engaged a house on Madison avenue, furnished it without regard to expense, and in less than a fortnight, installed her friends in it. Then she had a talk with Dan about his plans.

"Do you wish to remain in your place," she asked, "or would you like to obtain a better education first?"

"To obtain an education," said Dan, promptly.

"Then give notice to your employer of your intention."

Dan did so.

Mrs. Vernon in a second interview informed him that besides defraying his school expenses, she should give him an allowance of fifty dollars a month for his own personal needs.

"May I give a part of it to my mother?" asked Dan.

"No."

His countenance fell, but Mrs. Vernon smiled.

"You don't ask why I refuse," she said.

"I suppose you have a good reason," said Dan, dubiously.

"My reason is that I shall pay your mother double

this sum. Unless she is very extravagant it ought to be enough to defray her expenses."

"How liberal you are, Mrs. Vernon!" exclaimed Dan, in fresh astonishment.

"Mrs. Vernon!"

"Aunt Harriet, I mean."

"That is better."

All these important changes in the position of the Mordaunts were unknown to their old friends, who, since their loss of property, had given them the cold shoulder.

One day Tom Carver, in passing the house, saw Dan coming down the steps quite as handsomely dressed as himself. His surprise and curiosity were aroused.

"Are you running errands?" he asked.

"No. What makes you think so?" returned Dan, smiling.

"I didn't know what else could carry you to such a house."

"Oh, that's easily explained," said Dan. "I live here."

"You live there!" ejaculated Tom.

"Yes."

"Oh, I see. You are in the employ of the family."

"Not exactly," said Dan. "I have nothing to do."

"Does your mother live there?"

"Yes."

"You don't mean to say she boards there?"

"We are living with my aunt."

"Is your aunt rich?" asked Tom, in a more deferential tone.

"I believe she is. At any rate she gives me a handsome allowance."

"You don't say so! How much does she give you?"

"Fifty dollars a month."

"And you don't have anything to do?"

"Only to study. I am going back to school."

"What a lucky fellow!" exclaimed Tom, enviously. "Why, my father only allows me three dollars a week."

"I could get along on that. I don't need as much as my aunt allows me."

"I say, Dan," said Tom, in the most friendly terms, "I'm awfully hard up. Could you lend me five dollars?"

"Yes," said Dan, secretly amused with the change in Tom's manner.

"You always were a good fellow!" said Tom, link-

ing his arm in Dan's. "I'm very glad you're rich again. You must come to see me often."

"Thank you," said Dan, smiling, "but I'm afraid you have forgotten something."

"What do you mean?"

"You know I used to be a newsboy in front of the Astor House."

"That don't matter."

"And you might not care to associate with a news boy."

"Well, you are all right now," said Tom, magnanimously.

"You didn't always think so, Tom."

"I always thought you were a gentleman, Dan. I am coming to see you soon. You must introduce me to your aunt."

"I suppose it's the way of the world," thought Dan. "It is lucky that there are some true friends who stick by us through thick and thin."

Mrs. Mordaunt had an experience similar to Dan's. Her old acquaintances, who, during her poverty never seemed to recognize her when they met, gradually awoke to the consciousness of her continued existence, and left cards. She received them politely, but rated their professions of friendship at their true value. They had not been "friends in need," and she could not count them "friends indeed."

CHAPTER XLII.

CONCLUSION.

Six years rolled by, bringing with them many changes. The little family on Madison avenue kept together. Mrs. Vernon was never happier than now. She had a hearty love for young people, and enjoyed the growth and development of her niece Althea, and Dan, whom she called her nephew and loved no less.

Dan is now a young man. He completed his preparation for college, and graduated with high honors. He is no less frank, handsome, and self-reliant than when as a boy he sold papers in front of the Astor House for his mother's support. He looks forward to a business life, and has accepted an invitation to go abroad to buy goods in London and Paris for his old firm. He was, in fact, preparing to go when a mysterious letter was put in his hands. It ran thus:

"MR. DANIEL MORDAUNT:—I shall take it as a great favor if you will come to the St. Nicholas Hotel this evening, and inquire for me. I am sick, or I would not trouble you. Do not fail. I have to speak to you on a matter of great importance.

"JOHN DAVIS."

"John Davis!" repeated Dan. "I don't know of any one of that name. Do you, mother?"

"I cannot think of any one," said Mrs. Mordaunt. "I hope you won't go, Dan," she added, anxiously; "it may be a trap laid by a wicked and designing man."

"You forget that I am not a boy any longer, mother," said Dan, smiling. "I think I can defend myself, even if Mr. Davis is a wicked and designing person."

Nevertheless Mrs. Mordaunt saw Dan depart with anxiety. To her he was still a boy, though in the eyes of others an athletic young man.

On inquiring for Mr. Davis at the hotel, Dan was ushered into a room on the third floor. Seated in an arm-chair was an elderly man, weak and wasted, apparently in the last stages of consumption. He eyed Dan eagerly.

"You are Daniel Mordaunt?" he asked.

"Yes, sir."

"Son of Lawrence Mordaunt?"

"Yes. Did you know my father?"

The old man sighed.

"It would have been well if he had not known me, for I did him a great wrong."

"You!—John Davis!" said Dan, trying to connect the name with his father.

"That is not my real name. You see before you Robert Hunting, once your father's book-keeper."

Dan's handsome face darkened, and he said, bitterly:

"You killed my father!"

"Heaven help me, I fear I did!" sighed Davis—to call him by his later name.

"The money of which you robbed him caused him to fail, and failure led to his death."

"I have accused myself of this crime oftentimes," moaned Davis. "Don't think that the money brought happiness, for it did not."

"Where have you been all these years?"

"First, I went to Europe. There I remained a year. From Europe I went to Brazil, and engaged in business in Rio Janeiro. A year since I found my health failing, and have come back to New York to die. But before I die I want to make what reparation I can."

"You cannot call my father back to me," said Dan, sadly.

"No; but I can restore the money that I stole. That is the right word—stole. I hope you and your mother have not suffered?"

"We saw some hard times, but for years we have lived in comfort."

"I am glad of that. Will you bring a lawyer to

me to-morrow evening? I want to make restitution. Then I shall die easier."

"You might keep every dollar if you would bring my father back."

"Would that I could! I must do what I can."

The next evening Davis transferred to Dan and his mother property amounting to fifty thousand dollars, in payment of what he had taken, with interest, and in less than a month later he died, Dan taking upon himself the charge of the funeral. His trip to Europe was deferred, and having now capital to contribute, he was taken as junior partner into the firm where he had once filled the position of office-boy.

Tom Carver is down in the world. His father had failed disastrously, and Tom is glad to accept a minor clerkship from the boy at whom he once sneered.

Julia Rogers has never lost her preference for Dan. It is whispered that they are engaged, or likely soon to be, and Dan's assiduous attentions to the young lady make the report a plausible one.

John Hartley was sentenced to a term of years in prison. Harriet Vernon dreaded the day of his release, being well convinced that he would seize the earliest opportunity to renew his persecutions. She had about made up her mind to buy him off, when she received intelligence that he was carried off by fever, barely a month before the end of his term. It was a sad end

of a bad life, but she could not regret him. Althea was saved the knowledge of her father's worthlessness. She was led to believe that he had died when she was a little girl.

And now the curtain must fall. Dan, the young detective, has entered upon a career of influence and prosperity. The hardships of his earlier years contributed to strengthen his character, and give him that self-reliance of which the sons of rich men so often stand in need. A similar experience might have benefited Tom Carver, whose lofty anticipations have been succeeded by a very humble reality. Let those boys who are now passing through the discipline of poverty and privation, take courage and emulate the example of "Dan, the Detective."

THE END.

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The scene of this tale is laid on an island in the Malay Archipelago. Philip Garland, a young animal collector and trainer, of New York, sets sail for Eastern seas in quest of a new stock of li ing curiosities. The vessel is wrecked off the coast of Borneo and young Garland, the sole survivor of the disaster, is cast ashore on a small island and captured by the apes that overrun the place. The lad discovers that the ruling spirit of the monkey tribe is a gigantic and vicious baboon, whom he identifies as Goliah, an animal at one time in his possession and with whose instruction he had been especially diligent. The brute recognizes him, and with a kind of malignant satisfaction puts his former master through the same course of training he had himself experienced with a faithfulness of detail which shows how astonishing is monkey recollection. Very novel indeed is the way by which the young man escapes death. Mr. Prentice has certainly worked a new vein on juvenile fiction, and the ability with which he handles a difficult subject stamps him as a writer of undoubted skill.

The Bravest of the Brave; or, With Peterborough in Spain. By G. A. HENTY. With full-page Illustrations by H. M. PAGET. 12mo, cloth, price $1.00.

There are few great leaders whose lives and actions have so completely fallen into oblivion as those of the Earl of Peterborough. This is largely due to the fact that they were overshadowed by the glory and successes of Marlborough. His career as general extended over little more than a year, and yet, in that time, he showed a genius for warfare which has never been surpassed.

"Mr. Henty never loses sight of the moral purpose of his work—to enforce the doctrine of courage and truth. Lads will read 'The Bravest of the Brave' with pleasure and profit; of that we are quite sure."—*Daily Telegraph.*

The Cat of Bubastes: A Story of Ancient Egypt. By G. A. HENTY. With full page Illustrations. 12mo, cloth, price $1.00.

A story which will give young readers an unsurpassed insight into the customs of the Egyptian people. Amuba, a prince of the Rebu nation, is carried with his charioteer Jethro into slavery. They become inmates of the house of Ameres, the Egyptian high-priest, and are happy in his service until the priest's son accidentally kills the sacred cat of Bubastes. In an outburst of popular fury Ameres is killed, and it rests with Jethro and Amuba to secure the escape of the high-priest's son and daughter.

"The story, from the critical moment of the killing of the sacred cat to the perilous exodus into Asia with which it closes, is very skillfully constructed and full of exciting adventures. It is admirably illustrated."—*Saturday Review.*

With Washington at Monmouth: A Story of Three Philadelphia Boys. By JAMES OTIS. 12mo, cloth, price $1.00.

Three Philadelphia boys, Seth Graydon "whose mother conducted a boarding-house which was patronized by the British officers;" Enoch Ball, "son of that Mrs. Ball whose dancing school was situated on Letitia Street," and little Jacob, son of "Chris, the Baker," serve as the principal characters. The story is laid during the winter when Lord Howe held possession of the city, and the lads aid the cause by assisting the American spies who make regular and frequent visits from Valley Forge. One reads here of home-life in the captive city when bread was scarce among the people of the lower classes, and a reckless prodigality shown by the British officers, who passed the winter in feasting and merry-making while the members of the patriot army but a few miles away were suffering from both cold and hunger. The story abounds with pictures of Colonial life skillfully drawn, and the glimpses of Washington's soldiers which are given show that the work has not been hastily done, or without considerable study.

For the Temple: A Tale of the Fall of Jerusalem. By G. A. HENTY. With full-page Illustrations by S. J. SOLOMON. 12mo, cloth, price $1.00.

Mr. Henty here weaves into the record of Josephus an admirable and attractive story. The troubles in the district of Tiberias, the march of the legions, the sieges of Jotapata, of Gamala, and of Jerusalem, form the impressive and carefully studied historic setting to the figure of the lad who passes from the vineyard to the service of Josephus, becomes the leader of a guerrilla band of patriots, fights bravely for the Temple, and after a brief term of slavery at Alexandria, returns to his Galilean home with the favor of Titus.

"Mr. Henty's graphic prose pictures of the hopeless Jewish resistance to Roman sway add another leaf to his record of the famous wars of the world."—*Graphic.*

Facing Death; or, The Hero of the Vaughan Pit. A Tale of the Coal Mines. By G. A. HENTY. With full-page Illustrations by GORDON BROWNE. 12mo, cloth, price $1.00.

"Facing Death" is a story with a purpose. It is intended to show that a lad who makes up his mind firmly and resolutely that he will rise in life, and who is prepared to face toil and ridicule and hardship to carry out his determination, is sure to succeed. The hero of the story is a typical British boy, dogged, earnest, generous, and though "shamefaced" to a degree, is ready to face death in the discharge of duty.

"The tale is well written and well illustrated, and there is much reality in the characters. If any father, clergyman, or schoolmaster is on the lookout for a good book to give as a present to a boy who is worth his salt, this is the book we would recommend."—*Standard.*

Tom Temple's Career. By HORATIO ALGER. 12mo, cloth, price $1.00.

Tom Temple, a bright, self-reliant lad, by the death of his father becomes a boarder at the home of Nathan Middleton, a penurious insurance agent. Though well paid for keeping the boy, Nathan and his wife endeavor to bring Master Tom in line with their parsimonious habits. The lad ingeniously evades their efforts and revolutionizes the household. As Tom is heir to $40,000, he is regarded as a person of some importance until by an unfortunate combination of circumstances his fortune shrinks to a few hundreds. He leaves Plympton village to seek work in New York, whence he undertakes an important mission to California, around which center the most exciting incidents of his young career. Some of his adventures in the far west are so startling that the reader will scarcely close the book until the last page shall have been reached. The tale is written in Mr. Alger's most fascinating style, and is bound to please the very large class of boys who regard this popular author as a prime favorite.

Maori and Settler: A Story of the New Zealand War. By G. A. HENTY. With full-page Illustrations by ALFRED PEARSE. 12mo, cloth, price $1.00.

The Renshaws emigrate to New Zealand during the period of the war with the natives. Wilfrid, a strong, self-reliant, courageous lad, is the mainstay of the household. He has for his friend Mr. Atherton, a botanist and naturalist of herculean strength and unfailing nerve and humor. In the adventures among the Maoris, there are many breathless moments in which the odds seem hopelessly against the party, but they succeed in establishing themselves happily in one of the pleasant New Zealand valleys.

"Brimful of adventure, of humorous and interesting conversation, and vivid pictures of colonial life."—*Schoolmaster.*

Julian Mortimer: A Brave Boy's Struggle for Home and Fortune. By HARRY CASTLEMON. 12mo, cloth, price $1.00.

Here is a story that will warm every boy's heart. There is mystery enough to keep any lad's imagination wound up to the highest pitch. The scene of the story lies west of the Mississippi River, in the days when emigrants made their perilous way across the great plains to the land of gold. One of the startling features of the book is the attack upon the wagon train by a large party of Indians. Our hero is a lad of uncommon nerve and pluck, a brave young American in every sense of the word. He enlists and holds the reader's sympathy from the outset. Surrounded by an unknown and constant peril, and assisted by the unswerving fidelity of a stalwart trapper, a real rough diamond, our hero achieves the most happy results. Harry Castlemon has written many entertaining stories for boys, and it would seem almost superfluous to say anything in his praise, for the youth of America regard him as a favorite author.

"Carrots:" Just a Little Boy. By MRS. MOLESWORTH. With Illustrations by WALTER CRANE. 12mo, cloth, price 75 cents.

"One of the cleverest and most pleasing stories it has been our good fortune to meet with for some time. Carrots and his sister are delightful little beings, whom to read about is at once to become very fond of."—*Examiner.*

"A genuine children's book: we've seen 'em seize it, and read it greedily. Children are first-rate critics, and thoroughly appreciate Walter Crane's illustrations."—*Punch.*

Mopsa the Fairy. By JEAN INGELOW. With Eight page Illustrations. 12mo, cloth, price 75 cents.

"Mrs. Ingelow is, to our mind, the most charming of all living writers for children, and 'Mopsa' alone ought to give her a kind of pre-emptive right to the love and gratitude of our young folks. It requires genius to conceive a purely imaginary work which must of necessity deal with the supernatural, without running into a mere riot of fantastic absurdity; but genius Miss Ingelow has and the story of 'Jack' is as careless and joyous, but as delicate, as a picture of childhood."—*Eclectic.*

A Jaunt Through Java: The Story of a Journey to the Sacred Mountain. By EDWARD S. ELLIS. 12mo, cloth, price $1.00

The central interest of this story is found in the thrilling adventures of two cousins, Hermon and Eustace Hadley, on their trip across the island of Java, from Samarang to the Sacred Mountain. In a land where the Royal Bengal tiger runs at large, where the rhinoceros and other fierce beasts are to be met with at unexpected moments; it is but natural that the heroes of this book should have a lively experience. Hermon not only distinguishes himself by killing a full grown tiger at short range, but meets with the most startling adventure of the journey. There is much in this narrative to instruct as well as entertain the reader, and so deftly has Mr. Ellis used his material that there is not a dull page in the book. The two heroes are brave, manly young fellows, bubbling over with boyish independence. They cope with the many difficulties that arise during the trip in a fearless way that is bound to win the admiration of every lad who is so fortunate as to read their adventures.

Wrecked on Spider Island; or, How Ned Rogers Found the Treasure. By JAMES OTIS. 12mo, cloth, price $1.00.

A "down-east" plucky lad who ships as cabin boy, not from love of adventure, but because it is the only course remaining by which he can gain a livelihood. While in his bunk, seasick, Ned Rogers hears the captain and mate discussing their plans for the willful wreck of the brig in order to gain the insurance. Once it is known he is in possession of the secret the captain maroons him on Spider Island, explaining to the crew that the boy is afflicted with leprosy. While thus involuntarily playing the part of a Crusoe, Ned discovers a wreck submerged in the sand, and overhauling the timbers for the purpose of gathering material with which to build a hut finds a considerable amount of treasure. Raising the wreck; a voyage to Havana under sail; shipping there a crew and running for Savannah, the attempt of the crew to seize the little craft after learning of the treasure on board, and, as a matter of course, the successful ending of the journey, all serve to make as entertaining a story of sea-life as the most captious boy could desire.

Geoff and Jim: A Story of School Life. By ISMAY THORN. Illustrated by A. G. WALKER. 12mo, cloth, price 75 cents.

"This is a prettily told story of the life spent by two motherless bairns at a small preparatory school. Both Geoff and Jim are very lovable characters, only Jim is the more so; and the scrapes he gets into and the trials he endures will, no doubt, interest a large circle of young readers."—*Church Times.*

"This is a capital children's story, the characters well portrayed, and the book tastefully bound and well illustrated."—*Schoolmaster.*

"The story can be heartily recommended as a present for boys."—*Standard.*

The Castaways; or, On the Florida Reefs. By JAMES OTIS. 12mo, cloth, price $1.00.

This tale smacks of the salt sea. It is just the kind of story that the majority of boys yearn for. From the moment that the Sea Queen dispenses with the services of the tug in lower New York bay till the breeze leaves her becalmed off the coast of Florida, one can almost hear the whistle of the wind through her rigging, the creak of her straining cordage as she heels to the leeward, and feel her rise to the snow-capped waves which her sharp bow cuts into twin streaks of foam. Off Marquesas Keys she floats in a dead calm. Ben Clark, the hero of the story, and Jake, the cook, spy a turtle asleep upon the glassy surface of the water. They determine to capture him, and take a boat for that purpose, and just as they succeed in catching him a thick fog cuts them off from the vessel, and then their troubles begin. They take refuge on board a drifting hulk, a storm arises and they are cast ashore upon a low sandy key. Their adventures from this point cannot fail to charm the reader. As a writer for young people Mr. Otis is a prime favorite. His style is captivating, and never for a moment does he allow the interest to flag. In "The Castaways" he is at his best.

Tom Thatcher's Fortune. By HORATIO ALGER, JR. 12mo, cloth, price $1.00.

Like all of Mr. Alger's heroes, Tom Thatcher is a brave, ambitious, unselfish boy. He supports his mother and sister on meager wages earned as a shoe-pegger in John Simpson's factory. The story begins with Tom's discharge from the factory, because Mr. Simpson felt annoyed with the lad for interrogating him too closely about his missing father. A few days afterward Tom learns that which induces him to start overland for California with the view of probing the family mystery. He meets with many adventures. Ultimately he returns to his native village, bringing consternation to the soul of John Simpson, who only escapes the consequences of his villainy by making full restitution to the man whose friendship he had betrayed. The story is told in that entertaining way which has made Mr. Alger's name a household word in so many homes.

Birdie: A Tale of Child Life. By H. L. CHILDE-PEMBERTON. Illustrated by H. W. RAINEY. 12mo, cloth, price 75 cents.

"The story is quaint and simple, but there is a freshness about it that makes one hear again the ringing laugh and the cheery shout of children at play which charmed his earlier years."—*New York Express.*

Popular Fairy Tales. By the BROTHERS GRIMM. Profusely Illustrated, 12mo, cloth, price $1.00.

"From first to last, almost without exception, these stories are delightful."—*Athenæum.*

With Lafayette at Yorktown: A Story of How Two Boys Joined the Continental Army. By JAMES OTIS. 12mo, cloth, price $1.00.

The two boys are from Portsmouth, N. H., and are introduced in August, 1781, when on the point of leaving home to enlist in Col. Scammell's regiment, then stationed near New York City. Their method of traveling is on horseback, and the author has given an interesting account of what was expected from boys in the Colonial days. The lads, after no slight amount of adventure, are sent as messengers—not soldiers—into the south to find the troops under Lafayette. Once with that youthful general they are given employment as spies, and enter the British camp, bringing away valuable information. The pictures of camp-life are carefully drawn, and the portrayal of Lafayette's character is thoroughly well done. The story is wholesome in tone, as are all of Mr. Otis' works. There is no lack of exciting incident which the youthful reader craves, but it is healthful excitement brimming with facts which every boy should be familiar with, and while the reader is following the adventures of Ben Jaffreys and Ned Allen he is acquiring a fund of historical lore which will remain in his memory long after that which he has memorized from text-books has been forgotten.

Lost in the Canon: Sam Willett's Adventures on the Great Colorado. By ALFRED R. CALHOUN. 12mo, cloth, price $1.00.

This story hinges on a fortune left to Sam Willett, the hero, and the fact that it will pass to a disreputable relative if the lad dies before he shall have reached his majority. The Vigilance Committee of Hurley's Gulch arrest Sam's father and an associate for the crime of murder. Their lives depend on the production of the receipt given for money paid. This is in Sam's possession at the camp on the other side of the cañon. A messenger is dispatched to get it. He reaches the lad in the midst of a tearful storm which floods the cañon. His father's peril urges Sam to action. A raft is built on which the boy and his friends essay to cross the torrent. They fail to do so, and a desperate trip down the stream ensues. How the party finally escape from the horrors of their situation and Sam reaches Hurley's Gulch in the very nick of time, is described in a graphic style that stamps Mr. Calhoun as a master of his art.

Jack: A Topsy Turvy Story. By C. M. CRAWLEY-BOEVEY With upward of Thirty Illustrations by H. J. A. MILES 12mo, cloth, price 75 cents.

"The illustrations deserve particular mention, as they add largely to the interest of this amusing volume for children. Jack falls asleep with his mind full of the subject of the fishpond, and is very much surprised presently to find himself an inhabitant of Waterworld, where he goes though wonderful and edifying adventures. A handsome and pleasant book." *Literary World.*

Search for the Silver City: A Tale of Adventure in Yucatan. By JAMES OTIS. 12mo, cloth, price $1.00.

Two American lads, Teddy Wright and Neal Emery, embark on the steam yacht Day Dream for a short summer cruise to the tropics. Homeward bound the yacht is destroyed by fire. All hands take to the boats, but during the night the boat is cast upon the coast of Yucatan. They come across a young American named Cummings, who entertains them with the story of the wonderful Silver City, of the Chan Santa Cruz Indians. Cummings proposes with the aid of a faithful Indian ally to brave the perils of the swamp and carry off a number of the golden images from the temples. Pursued with relentless vigor for days their situation is desperate. At last their escape is effected in an astonishing manner. Mr. Otis has built his story on an historical foundation. It is so full of exciting incidents that the reader is quite carried away with the novelty and realism of the narrative.

Frank Fowler, the Cash Boy. By HORATIO ALGER, JR. 12mo, cloth, price $1.00.

Thrown upon his own resources Frank Fowler, a poor boy, bravely determines to make a living for himself and his foster-sister Grace. Going to New York he obtains a situation as cash boy in a dry goods store. He renders a service to a wealthy old gentleman named Wharton, who takes a fancy to the lad. Frank, after losing his place as cash boy, is enticed by an enemy to a lonesome part of New Jersey and held a prisoner. This move recoils upon the plotter, for it leads to a clue that enables the lad to establish his real identity. Mr. Alger's stories are not only unusually interesting, but they convey a useful lesson of pluck and manly independence.

Budd Boyd's Triumph; or, the Boy Firm of Fox Island. By WILLIAM P. CHIPMAN. 12mo, cloth, price $1.00.

The scene of this story is laid on the upper part of Narragansett Bay, and the leading incidents have a strong salt water flavor. Owing to the conviction of his father for forgery and theft, Budd Boyd is compelled to leave his home and strike out for himself. Chance brings Budd in contact with Judd Floyd. The two boys, being ambitious and clear sighted, form a partnership to catch and sell fish. The scheme is successfully launched, but the unexpected appearance on the scene of Thomas Bagsley, the man whom Budd believes guilty of the crimes attributed to his father, leads to several disagreeable complications that nearly caused the lad's ruin. His pluck and good sense, however, carry him through his troubles. In following the career of the boy firm of Boyd & Floyd, the youthful reader will find a useful lesson—that industry and perseverance are bound to lead to ultimate success.

The Errand Boy; or, How Phil Brent Won Success. By HORATIO ALGER, JR. 12mo, cloth, price $1.00.

The career of "The Errand Boy" embraces the city adventures of a smart country lad who at an early age was abandoned by his father. Philip was brought up by a kind-hearted innkeeper named Brent. The death of Mrs. Brent paved the way for the hero's subsequent troubles. Accident introduces him to the notice of a retired merchant in New York, who not only secures him the situation of errand boy but thereafter stands as his friend. An unexpected turn of fortune's wheel, however, brings Philip and his father together. In "The Errand Boy" Philip Brent is possessed of the same sterling qualities so conspicuous in all of the previous creations of this delightful writer for our youth.

The Slate Picker: The Story of a Boy's Life in the Coal Mines. By HARRY PRENTICE. 12mo, cloth, price $1.00.

This is a story of a boy's life in the coal mines of Pennsylvania. There are many thrilling situations, notably that of Ben Burton's leap into the "lion's mouth"—the yawning shute in the breakers—to escape a beating at the hands of the savage Spilkins, the overseer. Gracie Gordon is a little angel in rags, Terence O'Dowd is a manly, sympathetic lad, and Enoch Evans, the miner-poet, is a big-hearted, honest fellow, a true friend to all whose burdens seem too heavy for them to bear. Ben Burton, the hero, had a hard road to travel, but by grit and energy he advanced step by step until he found himself called upon to fill the position of chief engineer of the Kohinoor Coal Company.

A Runaway Brig; or, An Accidental Cruise. By JAMES OTIS. 12mo, cloth, price $1.00.

"A Runaway Brig" is a sea tale, pure and simple, and that's where it strikes a boy's fancy. The reader can look out upon the wide shimmering sea as it flashes back the sunlight, and imagine himself afloat with Harry Vandyne, Walter Morse, Jim Libby and that old shell-back, Bob Brace, on the brig Bonita, which lands on one of the Bahama keys. Finally three strangers steal the craft, leaving the rightful owners to shift for themselves aboard a broken-down tug. The boys discover a mysterious document which enables them to find a buried treasure, then a storm comes on and the tug is stranded. At last a yacht comes in sight and the party with the treasure is taken off the lonely key. The most exacting youth is sure to be fascinated with this entertaining story.

Fairy Tales and Stories. By HANS CHRISTIAN ANDERSEN. Profusely Illustrated, 12mo, cloth, price $1.00.

"If I were asked to select a child's library I should name these three volumes 'English,' 'Celtic,' and 'Indian Fairy Tales,' with Grimm and Hans Andersen's Fairy Tales."—*Independent*

The Island Treasure; or, Harry Darrel's Fortune. By FRANK H. CONVERSE. 12mo, cloth, price $1.00.

Harry Darrel, an orphan, having received a nautical training on a school-ship, is bent on going to sea with a boyish acquaintance named Dan Plunket. A runaway horse changes his prospects. Harry saves Dr. Gregg from drowning and the doctor presents his preserver with a bit of property known as Gregg's Island, and makes the lad sailing-master of his sloop yacht. A piratical hoard is supposed to be hidden somewhere on the island. After much search and many thwarted plans, at last Dan discovers the treasure and is the means of finding Harry's father. Mr. Converse's stories possess a charm of their own which is appreciated by lads who delight in good healthy tales that smack of salt water.

The Boy Explorers: The Adventures of Two Boys in Alaska. By HARRY PRENTICE. 12mo, cloth, price $1.00.

Two boys, Raymond and Spencer Manning, travel from San Francisco to Alaska to join their father in search of their uncle, who, it is believed, was captured and detained by the inhabitants of a place called the "Heart of Alaska." On their arrival at Sitka the boys with an Indian guide set off across the mountains. The trip is fraught with perils that test the lads' courage to the utmost. Reaching the Yukon River they build a raft and float down the stream, entering the Mysterious River, from which they barely escape with their lives, only to be captured by natives of the Heart of Alaska. All through their exciting adventures the lads demonstrate what can be accomplished by pluck and resolution, and their experience makes one of the most interesting tales ever written.

The Treasure Finders: A Boy's Adventures in Nicaragua. By JAMES OTIS. 12mo, cloth, price $1.00.

Roy and Dean Coloney, with their guide Tongla, leave their father's indigo plantation to visit the wonderful ruins of an ancient city. The boys eagerly explore the dismantled temples of an extinct race and discover three golden images cunningly hidden away. They escape with the greatest difficulty; by taking advantage of a festive gathering they seize a canoe and fly down the river. Eventually they reach safety with their golden prizes. Mr. Otis is the prince of story tellers, for he handles his material with consummate skill. We doubt if he has ever written a more entertaining story than "The Treasure Finders."

Household Fairy Tales. By the BROTHERS GRIMM. Profusely Illustrated, 12mo, cloth, price $1.00.

"As a collection of fairy tales to delight children of all ages this work ranks second to none."—*Daily Graphic.*

Dan the Newsboy. By HORATIO ALGER, JR. 12mo, cloth, price $1.00.

The reader is introduced to Dan Mordaunt and his mother living in a poor tenement, and the lad is pluckily trying to make ends meet by selling papers in the streets of New York. A little heiress of six years is confided to the care of the Mordaunts. At the same time the lad obtains a position in a wholesale house. He soon demonstrates how valuable he is to the firm by detecting the bookkeeper in a bold attempt to rob his employers. The child is kidnaped and Dan tracks the child to the house where she is hidden, and rescues her. The wealthy aunt of the little heiress is so delighted with Dan's courage and many good qualities that she adopts him as her heir, and the conclusion of the book leaves the hero on the high road to every earthly desire.

Tony the Hero: A Brave Boy's Adventure with a Tramp. By HORATIO ALGER, JR. 12mo, cloth, price $1.00.

Tony, a sturdy bright-eyed boy of fourteen, is under the control of Rudolph Rugg, a thorough rascal, shiftless and lazy, spending his time tramping about the country. After much abuse Tony runs away and gets a job as stable boy in a country hotel. Tony is heir to a large estate in England, and certain persons find it necessary to produce proof of the lad's death. Rudolph for a consideration hunts up Tony and throws him down a deep well. Of course Tony escapes from the fate provided for him, and by a brave act makes a rich friend, with whom he goes to England, where he secures his rights and is prosperous. The fact that Mr. Alger is the author of this entertaining book will at once recommend it to all juvenile readers.

A Young Hero; or, Fighting to Win. By EDWARD S. ELLIS. 12mo, cloth, price $1.00.

This story tells how a valuable solid silver service was stolen from the Misses Perkinpine, two very old and simple minded ladies. Fred Sheldon, the hero of this story and a friend of the old ladies, undertakes to discover the thieves and have them arrested. After much time spent in detective work, he succeeds in discovering the silver plate and winning the reward for its restoration. During the narrative a circus comes to town and a thrilling account of the escape of the lion from its cage, with its recapture, is told in Mr. Ellis' most fascinating style. Every boy will be glad to read this delightful book.

The Days of Bruce: A Story from Scottish History. By GRACE AGUILAR. Illustrated, 12mo, cloth, price $1.00.

"There is a delightful freshness, sincerity and vivacity about all of Grace Aguilar's stories which cannot fail to win the interest and admiration of every lover of good reading."—*Boston Beacon.*

Tom the Bootblack; or, The Road to Success. By HORATIO ALGER, JR. 12mo, cloth, price $1.00.

A bright, enterprising lad was Tom the bootblack. He was not at all ashamed of his humble calling, though always on the lookout to better himself. His guardian, old Jacob Morton, died, leaving him a small sum of money and a written confession that Tom, instead of being of humble origin, was the son and heir of a deceased Western merchant, and had been defrauded out of his just rights by an unscrupulous uncle. The lad started for Cincinnati to look up his heritage. But three years passed away before he obtained his first clue. Mr. Grey, the uncle, did not hesitate to employ a ruffian to kill the lad. The plan failed, and Gilbert Grey, once Tom the bootblack, came into a comfortable fortune. This is one of Mr. Alger's best stories.

Captured by Zulus: A story of Trapping in Africa. By HARRY PRENTICE. 12mo, cloth, price $1.00.

This story details the adventures of two lads, Dick Elsworth and Bob Harvey, in the wilds of South Africa, for the purpose of obtaining a supply of zoological curiosities. By stratagem the Zulus capture Dick and Bob and take them to their principal kraal or village. The lads escape death by digging their way out of the prison hut by night. They are pursued, and after a rough experience the boys eventually rejoin the expedition and take part in several wild animal hunts. The Zulus finally give up pursuit and the expedition arrives at the coast without further trouble. Mr. Prentice has a delightful method of blending fact with fiction. He tells exactly how wild-beast collectors secure specimens on their native stamping grounds, and these descriptions make very entertaining reading.

Tom the Ready; or, Up from the Lowest. By RANDOLPH HILL. 12mo, cloth, price $1.00.

This is a dramatic narrative of the unaided rise of a fearless, ambitious boy from the lowest round of fortune's ladder—the gate of the poorhouse—to wealth and the governorship of his native State. Thomas Seacomb begins life with a purpose. While yet a schoolboy he conceives and presents to the world the germ of the Overland Express Co. At the very outset of his career jealousy and craft seek to blast his promising future. Later he sets out to obtain a charter for a railroad line in connection with the express business. Now he realizes what it is to match himself against capital. Yet he wins and the railroad is built. Only an uncommon nature like Tom's could successfully oppose such a combine. How he manages to win the battle is told by Mr. Hill in a masterful way that thrills the reader and holds his attention and sympathy to the end.

Roy Gilbert's Search: A Tale of the Great Lakes. By WM. P. CHIPMAN. 12mo, cloth, price $1.00.

A deep mystery hangs over the parentage of Roy Gilbert. He arranges with two schoolmates to make a tour of the Great Lakes on a steam launch. The three boys leave Erie on the launch and visit many points of interest on the lakes. Soon afterward the lad is conspicuous in the rescue of an elderly gentleman and a lady from a sinking yacht. Later on the cruise of the launch is brought to a disastrous termination and the boys narrowly escape with their lives. The hero is a manly, self-reliant boy, whose adventures will be followed with interest.

The Young Scout; The Story of a West Point Lieutenant. By EDWARD S. ELLIS. 12mo, cloth, price $1.00.

The crafty Apache chief Geronimo but a few years ago was the most terrible scourge of the southwest border. The author has woven, in a tale of thrilling interest, all the incidents of Geronimo's last raid. The hero is Lieutenant James Decker, a recent graduate of West Point. Ambitious to distinguish himself so as to win well-deserved promotion, the young man takes many a desperate chance against the enemy and on more than one occasion narrowly escapes with his life. The story naturally abounds in thrilling situations, and being historically correct, it is reasonable to believe it will find great favor with the boys. In our opinion Mr. Ellis is the best writer of Indian stories now before the public.

Adrift in the Wilds: The Adventures of Two Shipwrecked Boys. By EDWARD S. ELLIS. 12mo, cloth, price, $1.00.

Elwood Brandon and Howard Lawrence, cousins and schoolmates, accompanied by a lively Irishman called O'Rooney, are en route for San Francisco. Off the coast of California the steamer takes fire. The two boys and their companion reach the shore with several of the passengers. While O'Rooney and the lads are absent inspecting the neighborhood O'Rooney has an exciting experience and young Brandon becomes separated from his party. He is captured by hostile Indians, but is rescued by an Indian whom the lads had assisted. This is a very entertaining narrative of Southern California in the days immediately preceding the construction of the Pacific railroads. Mr. Ellis seems to be particularly happy in this line of fiction, and the present story is fully as entertaining as anything he has ever written.

The Red Fairy Book. Edited by ANDREW LANG. Profusely Illustrated, 12mo, cloth, price $1.00.

"A gift book that will charm any child, and all older folk who have been fortunate enough to retain their taste for the old nursery stories."—*Literary World.*

The Boy Cruisers; or, Paddling in Florida. By St George Rathborne. 12mo, cloth, price, $1.00.

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